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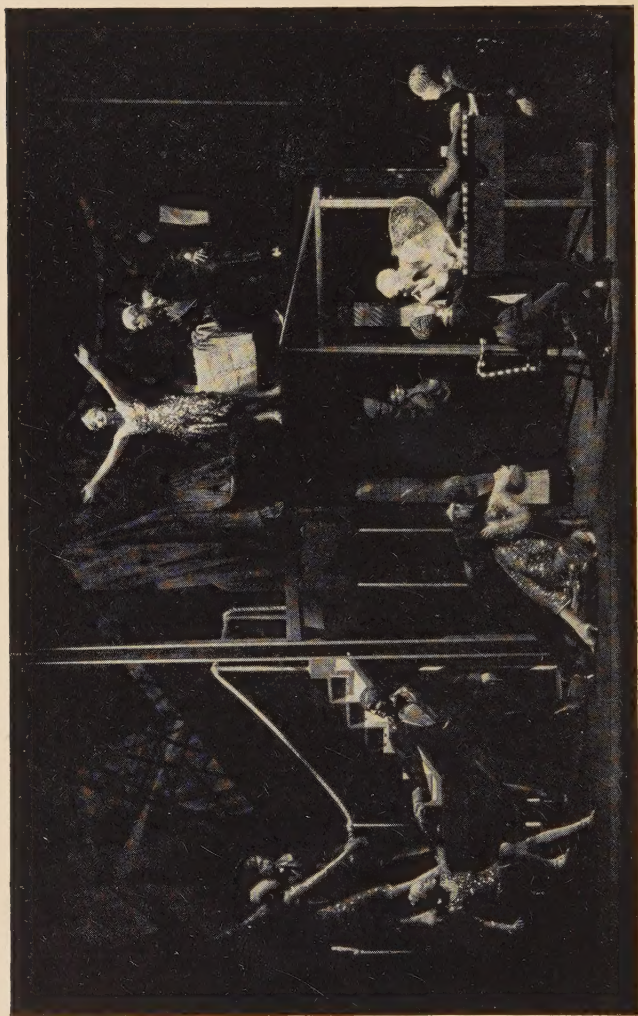
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THE NEIGHBORHOOD
PLAYHOUSE PLAYS

PINWHEEL





CABARET SCENE, PART IV

DA
Fa
P I N W H E E L

A Play by

FRANCIS EDWARDS FARAGOH

THE JOHN DAY COMPANY

New York

Mcmxxvii

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About the Author

FRANCIS EDWARDS FARAGOH came to New York from his native Hungary at the age of fourteen. He was educated in New York public schools: at the College of the City of New York and Columbia University. Upon leaving college he began to write short stories for various magazines, with interludes of newspaper work. His short stories won him inclusion in the O. Henry Prize Stories and in Edward O'Brien's annual anthology.

His first official contact with the theatre came when he was dramatic editor of Pearson's Magazine. Later he made the original translations of several Hungarian plays for the theatre. He is one of the founders and a director of the New Playwrights' Theatre.

Although he has lived in most of the European capitals during his twenty-nine years, he still prefers Manhattan to any of the Continental cities. *Pinwheel*, the expression of his intense interest in New York, is his first full-length contribution in the field of drama.

Note

The text of *Pinwheel*, as published in this volume, is the author's original version and does not embody the changes made by the Neighborhood Playhouse in the course of production.

In the first scene, for example, merely the subway crowds were represented, using one subway booth as the pivotal point of the action. The restless movement of the city was suggested by the recurrent flow of people, a de-personalized mass milling about to the accompanying sounds of whistles, sirens, bells and so forth.

Similarly, changes were made in the stage directions of the Coney Island scene in Part I and the Broadway scene of Part IV. Again, in order to focus the drama on the main characters, the Typist and Second and Third Workers of Part II were eliminated, also the monologues of the Housewives, while the Movie scene was shortened.

F. E. F.

Produced February 3, 1927

PIN WHEEL

A Play of New York

by FRANCIS EDWARDS FARAGOH

Staged and directed by ALICE LEWISOHN

Costumes and settings designed by DONALD OENSLAGER
and

Executed by NEIGHBORHOOD PLAYHOUSE WORKSHOPS

THE JANE	Dorothy Sands
THE GUY	Marc Loebell
THE LADY FRIEND	Paula Trueman
THE BOOKKEEPER	Albert Carroll
THE FAST WOMAN	Lily Lubell
HER COMPANION	George Heller
RADIO VOICE	Theodore Hecht
MANAGER	George Bratt
WORKER	Theodore Hecht
FIRST MRS.	Grace Stickley
SECOND MRS.	Mary George
SUGAR DADDY	Otto Hulicius

THE CROWDS:

Margaret Bickel, Anton Bundsman, Sophie Bernsohn, William Challee, Marion Freidberg, Mary George, George Hoag, David Lewis, Lily Lubell, Horace Burton Michael, Grace Stickley, Bertha Slutzer, Joseph H. Thayer, George Heller, Frances Cowles, John D. Haggart, Sadie Sussman, Theodore Hecht, George Bratt, and Otto Hulicius.

PART I

IN THE PLAY:

THE JANE

THE GUY

THE BOOKKEEPER

THE LADY FRIEND

THE FAST WOMAN

TYPIST

SUGAR DADDY

FAST WOMAN'S COMPANION

FIRST WORKER

AN ELDERLY MAN

FIRST MRS.

SECOND MRS.

THIRD MRS.

} THE
HOUSEWIVES

TWO MEN; TWO WOMEN; TWO BOYS; TWO
GIRLS; TOY DEALER; LEMONADE MAN; A
STROLLER; TWO POLICEMEN; A SOLEMN
GENTLEMAN; THE BOSS; THE MANAGER; TWO
WORKMEN; SINGER; PIANIST; WAITER; HEAD-
WAITER; A SALES-CLERK; UNEMPLOYED MAN.

PEOPLE OF THE CITY:—AT WORK; AT PLAY;
ON THE STREETS.

NEW YORK CITY, U. S. A.

PART I

One

[*This is New York. Not a single street, not a definite, identifiable section of the city, but a crosscut, a focusing, the tangible essence of the metropolis. The visible, architectural "feel" of New York: concrete and stone and steel and iron . . .*

[*Here is, then, something that carries with it a sense of the Woolworth Building, the Capitol Theatre, a Childs Restaurant, a cloak and suit shop, factory, home, vegetable market, meat market, tenement house, Fifth Avenue Library or even Grant's Tomb or the Yankee Stadium. Flat roofs and flat walls, suggestions of girders and derricks, advertising signs, flaming electric letters . . .*

[*The stage is deep. At the two ends, in the rear, are two subway booths. A constant procession of people, in and out of them. There are many people, of a common mold, of standardized speech, habits, movements, reactions. And, at any age, they are young.*

[*A breathless procession. A hurrying mob that has obscured its component individuals. A whirlwind,*

just now actuated by the alarm-clock,—for it is morning.

[The noises of the street: not as so many distinct sounds, but as a melody and accompaniment. Bells, the solid ring of iron, the thunder of wheels, horns, steam, whistles, and a recurrent jingle of coins . . . dynamic, yet never unduly aggressive.

[The alarm clocks . . . The rush is now on.]

VOICES: *[The morning chorus. Men and women. There is the binding, steady hum underlying it all, out of which now one voice rises with its single word or sentence, now another. The talk is rapid, unbroken; every one is in a hurry. There is no let-up; somehow the whole has the effect of one long speech.]* Hot . . . hot . . . the heat . . . hot . . . He got the job . . . In love . . . Thirty dollars . . . Red . . . Blue . . . Sleep . . . Her husband told me . . . WXYZ . . . Station WJE . . .

A VOICE SINGING: Oh, that's my little sweetie, oh . . .

A WOMAN'S VOICE: Sweethearts . . .

[Now as before] Five hundred dollars . . . Ham and eggs . . . In jail . . . A swell show . . . What legs, oh, boy! . . . Elegant apartment

. . . Not a Ford, you sap, a Buick . . . He's keepin' her . . . Jail . . .

A MAN'S VOICE: [*Addressing a woman next to him. They are in the foreground.*] The heat's unbearable!

A WOMAN'S VOICE: [*Answering him.*] Some-thin' fierce . . . Didn't sleep a wink . . .

A MAN'S VOICE: [*Again to her.*] Me neither! Whew, it's hot!

VOICES: [*Taking up the refrain. It bobs up and down in the crowd.*] Hot! Hot! Hot! . . . Hot! Hot! Hot!

[*Similarly, with a united voice.*] Whew!

VOICES: My radio set . . . The landlord . . . She's a peach . . . Them Russians . . . Two weeks at the seashore . . . Fifty dollars . . . A hundred dollars . . . Two hundred dollars . . . No real man wears suspenders . . . Movies . . . Blondes . . . Kisses, kisses . . . Dancin' . . . I got a belly ache . . . Love!

A VOICE SINGING: Oh, that's my honey baby, oh . . .

[*As before.*] A quart of gin . . . The Giants Two home runs . . . The senate . . .

[*Now more rapidly.*] Love . . . Money . . . Pork chops . . . Hot . . . Love . . . New job . . . God an' the Church . . . To hell with it . . . Hot . . . Hot . . .

[*General waving of handkerchiefs; brows are wiped.*] Whew . . . !!

[*The murmur of the crowd still haunts, but it is becoming more subdued now. The words can no longer be understood.*]

A MAN: [*Somewhere in the crowd.*] You'll die laughin' . . . the way it all started . . . He didn't show up at home for three days, see?

A WOMAN: [*Somewhere else.*] The poor baby was always weak an' after they took out his tonsils, he just up an' . . .

ANOTHER WOMAN: [*Elsewhere.*] I wasn't no dope to go to a hotel with 'im . . . Say, says I, whadda I look like . . . ?

ANOTHER MAN: [*Elsewhere.*] It's selectivity you want . . . an' distance . . . Now with a three-tube set . . .

A VOICE: [*Singing.*] Cutest little lady . . . Sweetest little . . . mmmmm! [*It trails off into soft humming.*]

A MAN: The heat . . .

CHORUS: Hot . . . hot . . . ho . . . h . . .
SSSSS . . . ssss . . . mmmmm!

[*The undercurrent of talk remains, but the voices no longer bubble. There is a murmur, steady, but always softer. The movement also becomes less aggressive, tending toward the Right, so as to prepare the stage for the entrance of:*

[*THE JANE and LADY FRIEND have just come out of the subway. Both are young, but while the LADY FRIEND is dressed with the cheap elegance of the stenographer, THE JANE is rather indifferent, uncertain in her attire, almost shabby. The LADY FRIEND is somewhat older and this is indicated by her self-assurance, her glib sophistication. She is "wise." They come forward, Left, and stop. The LADY FRIEND keeps on glancing at her tabloid newspaper.*]

THE JANE: [*Stopping impatiently.*] Come on, drop that News, will you? We gonna be terrible late . . .

LADY FRIEND: [*Reading.*] Aw, jus' a min'te! See, here's 'er pitcher! "A rich man's darlin'," it says here. He was an old guy an' the other feller was young, a han'some actor . . . So she killed for love, umm . . . Gawd, can you blame 'er?

THE JANE: Can't blame 'er for killin' 'er husband? I'm surprised at you!

LADY FRIEND: There wasn't nothin' else for 'e . . . "A child-wife, yearnin' to be free" . . . You can read what she said. . . . "A broken heart in spite o' all the lux'ry an' jewels . . . [Giggling.] 'Course, no jewels would never break my heart! Gosh, a coupla classy diamon' ring or a string o' pearls . . .

THE JANE: Yeah, just keep on waitin' for 'em . . . Know any more jokes?

LADY FRIEND: [*Shrugs.*] Aw, I seen bigger wonders! You can't never tell . . . One o' these days a rich feller might come along an' . . .

THE JANE: That what you got in your head 'gain?

LADY FRIEND: What, then? Takin' dictation all day long, maybe? Gettin' cramps, poundin' the typewriter for the rest o' my life, maybe . . . [*Yawns*] Gee, but am I sleepy!

THE JANE: Sure you sleepy! Musta hung round the stoop till mornin' 'gain. With some sappy sheik . . .

LADY FRIEND: He wasn't sappy . . .

[*Dreamily.*] He was classy! What a dancer. . . . An' . . . an' made love somethin' elegant . . .

THE JANE: [*Scandalized.*] On the stoop?

LADY FRIEND: What you think?! In the hall . . .

THE JANE: Kissin' . . .!

LADY FRIEND: Sure, kissin'! What then?

THE JANE: Aw . . . I dunno . . . You're havin' lotsa good times, though! Wisht I . . . [*She does not finish the sentence. There is longing in the voice. By this time, with frequent stops, they have come down to the front of the stage. LADY FRIEND reads.*]

LADY FRIEND: Gee! Lissen, here's an unmarried mother what . . .

THE JANE: [*Not paying attention.*] Lotsa good times . . . You got lotsa fellers . . .

LADY FRIEND: You're too slow, that's what's the matter . . . You gotta have pep!

THE JANE: I'd have pep, all right . . . I wanna have good times, too . . . I wanna be took out an' kissed an' . . .

LADY FRIEND: Well, what's stoppin' you? . . . Say, it's gettin' real late!

THE JANE: [*Waking.*] Gosh, you said it! Gotta be at work! [*Hurries forward. The LADY FRIEND lags behind for a moment, folding her newspaper.*]

[THE GUY, *who had entered some time ago and was leaning against a wall, front Left, watching the two, now moves forward. His movements are slow, in contrast to the speed of the crowd. Now he deliberately jostles the* LADY FRIEND.]

LADY FRIEND: Say . . . !

THE GUY: [*Carelessly tipping his hat.*] 'Scuse! No damages, I hope!

LADY FRIEND: [*Sharply.*] Some people got eyes but don't know how to use 'em!

THE GUY: They know, all right, once they get a chanct to look at *you*. Like we met before . . . ?!

LADY FRIEND: Not 'less you had another face on . . . [*Jerks up her chin, moves forward. THE GUY takes a step after her, places his hand on her arm.*]

THE GUY: [*Ingratiatingly.*] Aw, what's rushin' you?

LADY FRIEND: [*Snapping.*] My feet . . . !
[*She attempts to free her arm.*]

[THE JANE, *who had in the meantime, with difficulty, made her way to the door of the large "Factory," now discovers* LADY FRIEND's ab-

sence. She battles her way back to the pair, through the always thickening mob.]

THE JANE: [*In alarm.*] Jes's! It's late!

LADY FRIEND: [*Contemptuously, indicating THE GUY.*] Aw, this here wise-cracker here . . . [*Tears her arm from his grip, takes hold of THE JANE's hand; plunges into the crowd, dragging THE JANE with her.*]

THE JANE: For pity sakes. . . .

[*Head turned, her eyes are still on THE GUY. He returns her gaze with a cocksure, impudent smile. Winks. Waves carelessly to her.*

[*And the crowd continues to make strange patterns in its movements. The mass comes as a wedge between LADY FRIEND and THE JANE; the former still holds the latter's hand, but they are at arm's length from each other, and the human barrier is trying to insinuate itself between them.*]

THE GUY: [*Going closer to THE JANE.*] Say, lissen, Sis . . .

THE JANE: [*Lagging.*] Speakin' to me?

THE GUY: To you is right! Lissen . . . it's . . . Like we met before . . .?!]

THE JANE: [*Is fascinated. Resists pull of* LADY FRIEND'S *hand.*] No-oo . . . Couldn't 'ave. . . .

THE GUY: Musta been at some dance, maybe . . .

THE JANE: I don't go to such awful many . . .
No-oo . . .

THE GUY: Gowan,—a good-looker like you!

LADY FRIEND: [*Tugging at the hand; battling with the crowd; herself already engulfed.*] Come on, for the love o' . . .

THE JANE: I'm comin'. . . . [*Draws closer to the rim of the crowd.*]

THE GUY: [*Following her.*] Aw, wait a min'te, baby. . . .

VOICES: Late . . . late . . . late . . . laaa-ttte. . . .

[*A new surge, a new wave of motion, the* LADY FRIEND'S *hand is torn from* THE JANE'S *fingers.*]

LADY FRIEND: [*Resentfully, to those nearest her.*] Aww! What's the big idee . . . ?

[*She is carried on, toward the opposite end of the stage. THE JANE takes a step after her.*]

THE GUY: [*As before.*] I wanna tell you somethin'. . . .

THE JANE: I gotta hurry . . . to work. . . .
[*Throws herself against the wall of people, trying to break through. The wall resists her.*]

THE GUY: [*Is almost glued to her; takes hold of her arms now.*] Stick, baby doll! Nobody can make you go to work when you don't feel like it. You don't see *me* slavin', do you? You don't have to go to work!

[*She is trying to draw away.*]

What's the matter? You 'fraid o' me?

THE JANE: [*Slowly.*] I don't hardly know you!

THE GUY: Ha! Makes us even! Don't know *you*, neither! Ha-ha! That's a hot one! What you runnin' for? I ain't gonna hurt you! We could have a li'l fun . . . What you say? Forget your work . . .

THE JANE: But . . . I . . .

THE GUY: Aw, you ain't a slave . . .! [*This is almost a whisper:*] You know what to-day is?

THE JANE: What . . . ?

THE GUY: Er . . . A hell of a hot day, that's what! Summer . . . Yeah! Now, if we was to go down to the Island . . .

THE JANE: [*Fascinated.*] Coney

THE GUY: You said a mouthful! Well? [*He slips his arm around her waist.*]

[*The bell tolls again, once; a factory whistle starts its warning. A last mad rush in the crowd; it is thinning, as people file through the many doors.*]

THE JANE: My Gawd . . . [*Tries to draw out of his embrace. The whistle goes on.*]

LADY FRIEND: [*Appears at door of factory building; on top of a short flight of steps. Shouts to THE JANE.*] Hurry up! They're shuttin' the door!

THE JANE: [*Struggles with THE GUY, who does not release her.*] I'm gonna lose my job . . . Ma will kill me!

THE GUY: What you care, cutie? We'll hop on the subway an' . . .

THE JANE: [*Sobbing.*] What'll I tell Ma? A good job, too . . . [*Suddenly, with defiance.*] So I'll find another! An' I'm gonna have my fun . . . an' nobody can make me go to work if I don't feel like . . . an' I'm sick of workin' . . . [*Suddenly, to him.*] You . . . you ain't gonna try to be fresh nor nothin' . . . ?

THE GUY: Gee, I gotta promise in writin' yet? Don't I look like you could trust me? . . .

THE JANE: An' you meant it? You said Coney . . .

THE GUY: Sure, Coney . . .

THE JANE: Well,—the water must be elegant . . . [*She clings to his arm. Their backs are turned to the factory as they start toward the subway booth and disappear in it . . .*]

PART I

Two

[*Coney Island.*

[*The stage is conscious of the waves of the ocean, now; of the boardwalk and its benches, it knows of the Bearded Lady and the Dog-headed Boy, it has assimilated and re-created the sham minarets and cardboard towers, the "Cave of Jewels," "Honeymoon Yacht." The undulating challenge of the Great Scenic Railway is here; the turmoil, the color, the nickel and dime romance—everything.*

[*Against this setting, or rather atmosphere, is the ceaseless flow of the mass. Excited, giggling, shouting, shoving people,—all of them young, all of them "couples."*

[*Rattles, bells, the popping of pistols, the cries of vendors: "Hot Dog!" "Your pitcher took!" "Nickel a chance!" "This way . . ." forever repeating themselves.*]

THE JANE: [*Dashing out of the crowd; THE GUY'S arm is around her waist. She is breathless.*] Ahhh! . . . Wasn't it grand? . . .

Thought I'd die . . . my skirt blowin'
up . . .

THE GUY: What's the matter? You're all there
with the goods, kiddo!

THE JANE: [*Giggles.*] You had no business
lookin'!

THE GUY: Gowan! Any time you catch me missin'
sights . . . ! Be your age!

THE JANE: [*Shrugs, turns away.*] Aw, you're
too fresh, if you wanna know somethin' . . . !

THE GUY: Some like 'em fresh!

THE JANE: A li'l fresh, yeah, to show they
ain't asleep,—but not too fresh!

THE GUY: [*Laughs.*] Lissen to her! Why, li'l
sweetie, if some o' my gang was to see the way I
handle you, they'd think I turned cake-eater all
of a sudden. I was just kiddin'. What's the matter
with you?

THE JANE: [*Reproaching.*] In the Honeymoon
Yacht, too—you know . . .

THE GUY: [*Shrugs.*] I just kinda forgot myself,
that's all! [*Brightly.*] What's the diff, now? Le's
kiss an' make up. . . . [*Drawing her to him.*]

THE JANE: [*Coquettishly.*] I told you I don't
kiss no fellers. . . .

THE GUY: So's your old man! I heard that boloney before . . . [*Pressing her.*] Well?

THE JANE: [*Still reluctant.*] A girl's gotta be careful . . . You can't never tell if fellers are just kiddin' or . . .

THE GUY: With me you can tell. Yeah. . . . I ain't the kind that picks up a new jane every day. No, ma'am! Not that I couldn't, easy enough. . . . There's plenty of girls . . . But, no, I'm pretty particular. Once I fall in love, I stick.

THE JANE: [*Fascinated.*] What you mean?

THE GUY: What you mean what I mean?

THE JANE: [*Her face aglow with anticipation; in a low voice.*] You said somethin' about fallin' in love. . . .

THE GUY: Well . . . ? [*Looks at her with practiced eyes.*] What if I did say it? Eh? What if I'm sayin' it now? [*Bends to her.*] What would you say, sugar bowl? Would you . . . ?

[THE JANE without a word turns her face up to him. He kisses her, eagerly. She does not move, but her arms work convulsively. Now THE GUY again bends to her; a succession of kisses. Endless, sensual ones.]

THE GUY: [*Breathless.*] Well? How you feel now?

THE JANE: [*Limp, breathless. For a while she does not speak.*] That . . . that was love, them kisses? Umm . . . love, yeah? Long, passionate . . .

THE GUY: That's the idee!

THE JANE: [*Now clinging to him.*] I . . . Gonna say it?

THE GUY: Well, love . . . I love you an' you love me—it's like that, see?

THE JANE: Love at first sight . . . Oh! My heart is so full-like!

THE GUY: Maybe mine ain't, eh? Honeybunch. . . .

THE JANE: Us two . . . together . . . just lovin' each other . . . [*Without transition, gaily.*] Gonna get me a doll?

THE GUY: [*Rushes her in direction of "stand" piled with cheap novelties.*] I'd buy you all o' Looney Park . . .

[*Arrived at the counter, he picks up a "Kewpie Doll," fashioned into a standing lamp. To*
DEALER:] What you soak for these?

DEALER: [*Sticking his head forward, holds up three fingers:*] Three bucks straight . . . A swell present for the lady!

THE GUY: [*Flings down money. Hands doll to THE JANE.*] Wear it in good health . . . Ha-ha!

THE JANE: [*Toying with the doll, beaming at it.*] Thanking you, yours truly! Look, ain't it too cute for words? An' the gorgeous lampshade . . . [*Without transition.*] Oh, gosh, it's wonderful to be in love. . . .

[*As before.*] Whee! This is the life!

THE GUY: Them lights up there . . . Some works, this Coney! [*Taking her hand.*] So it's all settled between us . . . us two is steadies now . . .

THE JANE: [*Holding her hand over her heart.*] Steadies! [*Dreamily.*] Goin' steady . . . it ain't like just travelin' with a feller . . . It means goin' out with nobody else, don't it? Lovin' just each other! The way you made me happy . . . ! [*Quickly.*] Le's get a hot dog!

THE GUY: Sure, a hot dog! Anythin' for you . . . ! My sweetie!

THE JANE: With lotsa mustard! . . . You know, my heart keeps on beatin' like mad . . . That's love, doin' that! . . . Tell 'im extra sauerkraut . . .

[*They cross to frankfurter stand. THE GUY buys hot dogs. Soon they are eating.*]

[*Two couples cross the stage, among others.*]

FIRST GIRL: [*To FIRST BOY.*] Moe, stop your pinchin'! What you think this is—feel day?

FIRST BOY: Dry up! You know you're enjoyin' it!

[*They pass on.*]

SECOND BOY: Me—jealous? You're off your nut!

SECOND GIRL: Ain't I got eyes to see? For that one lousy dance I had with 'im . . .

SECOND BOY: You can sleep with 'im even, for all I give a dam'!

[*They pass on.*]

THE JANE: [*Still at frankfurter stand with THE GUY. Eating.*] I was always dreamin' of happiness like this . . . Some nice feller, kind-like. . . .

THE GUY: [*Eating. His mouth is full.*] Just before, when you kissed me . . . Say! Peaches an' cream!

THE JANE: [*Similarly finding it difficult to combine eating with words.*] It's terrible romantic . . . us two bein' in such genuine love . . . Romantic! . . . Say, this hot dog ain't so hot!

THE GUY: My . . . Mine neither. . . . Yeah,
it don't come more romantic, nohow.

[Suddenly presses her to him. There is a long kiss.]

THE JANE: Gosh! You got me full o' mustard!
Sweetie! The way you can kiss . . . Makes me
dizzy . . . with joy . . . I dunno . . . I wanna
drink!

THE GUY: Drink!

*[They retrace their steps to the frankfurter stand,
where he now commands the lemonade man.]*

Two!

*[LEMONADE MAN silently ladles out two glass-
fuls, hands them over the counter.]*

THE GUY: *[Between gulps.]* Never cared so much
before . . . for no girl. . . . You're diff'rent
. . . Drink's nice, eh . . . ? You!

THE JANE: *[Drinking.]* An' we're gonna be
steadies. . . .

THE GUY: Steadies . . . You an' me . . . us
two . . . You care, a whole lot? Real
hard . . . ?

*[The glass is still in his hand, but he is no longer
drinking. Looks fixedly at her, moves a step
closer.]*

THE JANE: [*Is about to take another sip, but the hypnotic glance stays her hand.*] I . . . Gee! [*Uneasily.*] What you lookin' for . . . like that . . . ? Don't. . . .

[*Not finishing her drink, puts the half-filled glass back on the counter. Speaks this turned away from him:*]

Come on, we'll dance. . . .

THE GUY: [*Still holds the glass. He is at her; his free arm grips her shoulder; savagely turns her face to him.*] Dance . . . ! I'm gonna squeeze you . . . I'm gonna squeeze you . . . go roun' . . . just break you in two . . . Yeah, dance, fast . . . Gosh, I'm hot! You ain't gonna say a word an' . . . hot baby. . . . [*Pants with excitement.*]

THE JANE: [*Nervous; frightened.*] Please . . . I don't wanna get frightened . . . Dearie! [*Puts her hand on his arm.*]

THE GUY: [*Laughs hoarsely. He is tremendously aroused. He has bent her under him, his face over hers.*] Dance, sure . . . dance . . . ! An' after that . . .

[THE JANE, *spellbound, can't move for a moment. Suddenly she trembles, tears out of his arm. Screams—then flees* . . .

[THE GUY dashes his lemonade glass to the ground. Leaps after her.

[There is a chase, through the crowd. Somehow the passion of the two communicates itself to those about them; the movement is whipped into a whirlwind, chaotic free-for-all. The couples separate, now combinations are formed, abandoned. All this to the accompaniment of shouts, groans, cries, harsh laughter. The tempo is furious, all restraint is gone, the gestures are hungry.

[Clawing hands reach out for THE GUY and THE JANE; they tear themselves loose. Now THE JANE stumbles, is caught by THE GUY.]

THE GUY: Now . . . you li'l . . . Come, come! Dancin' . . .

[The music of the hurdy-gurdy, which has thus far colored the scene, now dies away and the aggressive strains of a jazz-band blare forth.

[THE JANE, whom THE GUY crushes to him, first receives the hungry kisses passively—then passion conquers her and she throws her arms about his neck with a little cry of surrender.

[The music is stronger now. The frenzy of the crowd it at its height. The kiss is long and THE JANE and THE GUY are motionless as the stage darkens and the scene merges into the next, Coney Island vanishing to reveal—

PART I

Three

[*A dance hall.*

[*A single rich curtain. On it a constant play of colors in rigid geometrical patterns. At the two ends of the stage, outside the frame, two enormous negroes with saxophones. They are swaying and bending to the music. These are the only two instruments seen, although a full jazz-band is heard all the while.*

[*Under a single strong toplight, throwing a cone of light in the darkness, THE JANE and THE GUY are dancing. There is a noise of many shuffling feet—and whenever there is a lull in the action, giggles—but the lovers are the only dancers visible.*

[*THE JANE is really being carried, limp in the arms of THE GUY. The dialogue is spoken, not sung, and while it is actuated by the tempo of the music, it should not be bound by it.*]

THE GUY: You're my steady
My steady
My heart's so awful heavy—

Love's killin' me already!
I dunno what to do,
I'm wild for want of you . . .

THE JANE: It's a lovely band,
The floor is somethin' grand;
Oh, hold me, honey,
I'm feelin' funny!
Wisht I could understand
Why I love to feel your hand . . .
I'm dizzy
Get busy!
Press me
Caress me
Tight
Right
All night!

THE GUY: That's what I wanna do,
That's why I'm feelin' blue—
Wanna hold you tight
All night!

THE JANE: No
I gotta go!
My ma
She'll know!

THE GUY: Stick a li'l longer
While I hold you stronger . . .
You don't have to go,
Your ma will never know!

THE JANE: What you wanna do?
Way I'm scairt of you!

THE GUY: We'll just love an' coo . . .
Other people, too,
That's what they all do!
To-morrow, to-morrow
Home you can go . . .
But to-night . . .

THE JANE: 'Twon't be right!
My head is in a whirl,
I'm a decent girl!
Your eyes sure worry me—
No use to hurry me . . .
I won't stay
Won't do what you say,
No girl could
An' stay good!

THE GUY: I'm sighin'
Cryin'
For you I am dyin'!
I'm sad
Mad
Why don't you make me glad?

THE JANE: It's fierce
How your eyes can pierce . . . !

THE GUY: Come!

THE JANE: Must go home . . .
My ma . . . is so . . .

THE GUY: She'll never know!

THE JANE: What's this pain I got?
I'm so awful hot!
You're askin' such a lot. . . .

THE GUY: Don't you care?
Don't you dare?
I'm holdin' you
Enfoldin' you
An' wanna hold you tight
—All night!

THE JANE: All night . . . ?

THE GUY: That's right!

THE JANE: All night . . . !

THE GUY: Till the mornin's light!

THE JANE: [*Passionately.*] I . . . I wanna stay
with you,
I wanna hold you, too!

THE GUY: An' be alone, us two,
An' do what lovers do . . .
Tight . . .
Right. . . .

THE JANE: [*Whispering.*] An' be alone, us two,
An' do what lovers do . . .
You're gonna hold me so . . .

THE GUY: What love I'm gonna show!
An' no one's gonna know. . . .
Let's go!

[*She is impotent, limp in his arms; he fairly carries her out.*]

CURTAIN

PART II

PART II

One

[A floor in a skyscraper. The floors above and below should be suggested—for this is, perhaps, merely a scene that may be going on in any other part of the building just now.]

[The stage is divided into two rooms, with an elevator shaft separating them. This elevator is forever moving.]

[The room on the Left is an office, the one on the Right represents a factory. Here, again, these are not detailed scenes, but essences.]

[In the shop, there are many wheels, switches, wires, belts, pulleys, composing The Machine. This seems to have no definite function. There are many men, turning many cranks.]

[In the office, there is one very long, very large typewriter. Three girls are seated at it. A small desk near the end on the stage, Front. The girls are so seated as to suggest an inverted letter V. THE JANE is at the apex. LADY FRIEND to her Right.]

[*The dialogue alternates between these two rooms.*]

THE LADY FRIEND: [*Stops working.*] An' you ain't sorry?

THE JANE: [*Also stops.*] What's there to be sorry 'bout? He's good to me . . .

LADY FRIEND: It's only a coupla months yet. That's no proof he won't get tired . . .

THE JANE: [*Shrugs.*] I'm havin' my fun!

THE TYPIST: [*She, too, is idle.*] An' your ma nearly kills you for stayin' out nights . . .

THE JANE: So she nearly kills me! Well? That ain't gonna stop me.

LADY FRIEND: But he ruined you . . .

THE JANE: Aw, you make me sick! He couldn't 'ave done nothin' if I didn't . . .

TYPIST: So it was you that started?

THE JANE: Not me an' not him. It just happened. How do I know now . . . ? I was excited. My head wen' aroun' like mad. He said stay. So I stayed.

LADY FRIEND: An' now you're a ruined girl.

THE JANE: There's lots besides myself. Anyway, people can't tell by lookin' at me . . . An' he treats me all right.

MANAGER: [*To THE JANE.*] Dictation!

[*The typewriter, so far idle, starts going rapidly.*]

MANAGER: [*To THE JANE.*] You!

THE JANE: [*She goes to the desk with him, notebook in hand. They sit down.*]

MANAGER: Messrs . . . Yours of even date . . .
Shipment of linoleum, coffins, carpet-tacks, kerosene, diapers, lamps, sausages . . .

[*His voice trails off, although he still pantomimes dictation. The girls go through the motions of typing, noiselessly now. THE JANE is taking notes.*]

[*During this, in the other room:*]

FIRST WORKER: Then you still got 'er on the string, eh? Pretty near three months. Lucky stiff! Say, tell us, was she soused . . . you know, that first night?

THE GUY: Wasn't soused. No, wasn't soused at all. I told you lotsa times—just dopey with love . . .

SECOND WORKER: That's the way they get . . . I had a li'l Irish doll once . . . the real article she was!

THIRD WORKER: Any time you're through,

lemme know. I ain't throwin' nothin' over my shoulder . . .

THE GUY: You got a hell of a fat chanct! We're steadies! [*Laughs in a coarse, suggestive manner.*]

[MEN *laugh.*]

FIRST WORKER: Gonna marry her?

THE GUY: Catch me doin' it. I ain't soft in the head. . . .

[MEN *laugh.*]

THE GUY: Lissen, she . . .

[*The workers bend closer to him, though still at their cranks; faces already grinning in anticipation.*]

BOSS: [*Enters.*] Faster! What the hell you think I'm payin' you for? Hurry! The goods . . . the goods . . .

[*The machines are being turned, but there are no sounds.*]

[*In the other room. The MANAGER is now gone. The typewriter is idle.*]

LADY FRIEND: He'll have to marry you. You gotta make 'im . . .

TYPIST: Yeah! Then you'll be decent again. . . .

THE JANE: How'll that make me decent again?
I don't see . . . I don't wanna get married so quick, anyway. I ain't had my fun yet. Gimme a chanct.

TYPIST: Ain't you anxious? Don't you love 'im?

THE JANE: Yeah, I guess so . . . When I'm with 'im an' he's holdin' me . . . You got no idee how it gets me wild. . . . But I see lotsa other fellers, too—maybe if some o' them was to hold me the way he does an' kiss me . . .

LADY FRIEND: You can't be wantin' others when you love one man.

THE JANE: That's what I usta think, too! But gee . . . I don't know what's what, no more. Don't you ever feel like just givin' in . . . not worryin' 'bout what's gonna happen . . . ?

LADY FRIEND: I won't say I don't! But I don't give in! I know when to stop. I'm a good girl.

TYPIST: Me, too!

THE JANE: Wisht I knew what's what! It's a change. I want fun an' kisses . . . To run aroun' with lotsa guys. Why should I get married yet an' lose my good times? [*Pause.*] Take that book-keeper, for instance. . . . Downstairs, I mean. If he'd ever look at me . . . His eyes gimme the shivers . . . [*Laughs hysterically.*] The book-

keeper's eyes . . . He's got dark hair . . .
Mmm! Dark . . . Tall, dark an' handsome
. . . If he'd kiss me . . . just kiss me . . . an'
. . . That bookkeeper . . .
bookkeeper. . . .

PART II

Two

[A dark room somewhere in the skyscraper. The scene is completely black, with the exception of a spot of light, just enough to illuminate a clock-face, which seems to be hanging in mid-air. The hands point to six o'clock.]

THE JANE *is apparently alone on the stage; unseen.*]

THE JANE: It's six already. Maybe I'm a dope to be sittin' here . . . in this stock-room . . .

[There is a sound of a door opening, creaking shut again.]

THE JANE: *[Sighs audibly.]* Ah!

[Sounds of someone moving about in the dark. Pause. A kiss. A deep sigh.]

THE BOOKKEEPER: Who am I?

THE JANE: You're the Bookkeeper.

THE BOOKKEEPER: Why did I come?

THE JANE: Because I ast you to.

THE BOOKKEEPER: How did you ask me?

THE JANE: With my eyes.

THE BOOKKEEPER: An' . . . ?

THE JANE: An' the way I moved myself when I walked near you . . . close.

THE BOOKKEEPER: How'd you know I'd come?

THE JANE: I didn't. I just come up here to the stock-room an' kept on wishin'. I knew you seen me.

THE BOOKKEEPER: You didn't make me come for nothin' . . . ?!

THE JANE: I didn't.

THE BOOKKEEPER: You want me to kiss you?

THE JANE: Yeah.

THE BOOKKEEPER: Lissen, first! Bein' my girl ain't like bein' just any feller's. There's class to me. I'm a swell dresser. I travel with chorus girls. I'm speedy. They know me on Broadway. Actors, movie-people . . . I go to cabarets. To night-clubs. I'm good-lookin'. You gotta treat me right.

THE JANE: I'll treat you right.

THE BOOKKEEPER: An' don't go an' fall in love with me. An' don't come to me with hard-

luck stories. An' don't write me letters an' call me on the 'phone, once you see I'm through with you.

THE JANE: I won't.

THE BOOKKEEPER: I got a diamond ring. I wear silk shirts, nothin' but. I don't even have to work, 'less I wanna. There'd be plenty o' women tickled to pay my way . . . You don't even know my name.

THE JANE: I know that you're the Bookkeeper. That's enough.

THE BOOKKEEPER: You in love with me?

THE JANE: You told me I mustn't be.

THE BOOKKEEPER: Tell me!

THE JANE: Yeah, I'm in love with you.

THE BOOKKEEPER: I seen you with plenty other fellers already . . .

THE JANE: I got other fellers. An' a steady, too, besides. Only—I fell in love with you. I ain't just kiddin'. I used to think I was in love with my steady. Well, I know better, now. It's you I love . . . an' this is real. It's funny, all right.

THE BOOKKEEPER: It ain't so funny . . . It's 'cause I'm han'some an' a swell dresser.

THE JANE: Maybe. Then again maybe it ain't

'cause o' that. Anyway, I'm always gonna love you. Even if you never take me to classy places, an' never gimme good times. I can always think I'm in a cabaret or somewhere like that when I'm with you. Only—you an' I gotta go to the movies. Together. To-night.

THE BOOKKEEPER: To-night? It's nicer here.

THE JANE: First we'll stay here—'s long as you wanna . . . But I gotta be in the movies with you—to-night yet. . . . It . . . it's important. . . . Us two, in the movies.

THE BOOKKEEPER: Aw, all right . . . Not yet, though . . . After. . . . [*Silence.*] You wanna be kissed now?

THE JANE: Yeah. Real hard. Like no feller ever kissed me in all my life . . .

[*There is a vague sound—slight struggle or bodies in contact—then a sigh, followed by a deeper one. The clock-face darkens. There is silence.*

[*The vague music of a tinny piano—unmistakably a movie instrument—is heard now. Next, giggling from many sources. On the two sides of the stage several red-glowing "Exit" signs spring out of the darkness . . .*]

PART II

Three

[This is a dim-lit movie auditorium. Only two seats are visible, backs to the audience. At some distance from these seats, directly ahead, is a screen, on which a film is being shown just now. The picture, if any at all, should be sufficiently out of focus to make its figures appear unreal and grotesque.]

[THE JANE and THE BOOKKEEPER are seated, backs to the audience. They are embraced. THE JANE'S head is on the man's shoulder.]

THE JANE: *[Breathing audibly.]* Ah-h! Ain't he the good-looker . . . ? !

THE BOOKKEEPER: An actor on a pitcher. . . .

THE JANE: That's all right. Tall, dark an' han'-some!

[The piano comes in, hesitantly.]

THE BOOKKEEPER: So am I tall, dark an' han'-some!

THE JANE: I know. YOU're everythin' a feller

should be. When I'm with you, it's like I was with
all the fellers in the world . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: How—with all? I'm just
one, ain't I?

THE JANE: No. You ain't one. You wouldn't un-
derstan' an' I couldn't tell you, anyway. It's queer,
all right . . .

[*Her voice is chanting this. It is a clear, knowing
voice.*]

My steady is one.
The elevator man is one.
Charlie in my office is one.
Fellers on the street,
In the subway
At a dance
At a party
In a store—
One feller all the time.

My steady looks at me,
He looks at me lovin'
He looks long an' hard—
I look back in his eyes:
I wanna see a lot . . .
Soft things, soft pitchers,
Silk, dancin', trees, automobiles,
Everythin' . . .
But they ain't there!

I could look for a million years
An' keep on wishin'
An' keep on imaginin'
An' they won't be there.

Your eyes ain't like that.
I don't even know what's their color.
An' I don't have to look in 'em, either . . .

But you an' me can dance when I'm sittin' still
An' we can walk on grass
An' run an' swim
An' ride in a car . . .

My steady is one feller all the time,
But he ain't enough.
When I'm with 'im I wanna run
An' be with everybody.
Not with you—that don't happen . . .
You're everybody!

THE BOOKKEEPER: Sappy talk!

THE JANE: You're an actor
In the movies, maybe, or in vaudeville;
A poet, an' you make up stories about me,
An artist what paints me naked . . .
You're a college boy . . .
An' a . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: Aw, lemme lissen to the
pitcher for a change, will you? Give 'em a chance,
too . . . Look!

THE JANE: Eh . . . ? Oh, the pitcher . . .
Ohhh . . . Watch 'im holdin' 'er . . . [*Bends forward.*] Ahhh, that must be thrillin' . . .
tight like that . . . Manly embrace . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: Like I'm holdin' you . . .
[*Holds her tightly.*]

THE JANE: [*Panting.*] Yes, yes . . . Watch 'er
gettin' passionate . . . Desire! Temptation!

[*On the screen, evidently, a kiss. Mocking smacks, giggles, catcalls from the unseen audience. THE JANE is breathless, tense with excitement.*]

You seen that? The way he bit . . . Ah! . . .
Bent over her . . . She's all tremblin' . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: Aw, lemme show you what
a real kiss is like!

[*He draws THE JANE to him; kisses her. She returns the kiss, but bends forward again, breathless.*]

THE JANE: Ooh! His eyes . . .

[*THE BOOKKEEPER is kissing her again.*]

Hurt me . . . Hurt! Ouch! Harder! . . .
Ramon . . . Gee, Ramon, your arms . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: Hey, who you think I am,
anyhow—that Ramon Navarro bird?

THE JANE: Yeah . . . yeah . . . Ramon . . .
that's you . . . You . . . Ramon! I want . . .
Oh, Gawd . . . *Desire!*

*[Rises in her seat, lunges toward the canvas, then
seems to disappear in it, melting into the picture.]*

THE BOOKKEEPER: *[Remains in his place; he
knows nothing of her absence.]* Come on closer!
Atta baby! . . . Oh, hell, them guys ain't such
a lot . . . I could be in the movies, too . . . I
could be on the stage, even. I'm han'some an' got
a few brains. I'm gonna be famous yet . . . I'm
gonna have a car an' a chauffeur . . .

*[But he is no longer seen. There is a second's dark-
ness, after which is revealed——]*

PART II

Four

[*A Spanish courtyard, with the ornate trappings of the usual movie set. A flight of stairs upstage, Center. A balcony, with flowers and hangings. A stone fountain, perhaps, somewhat to the Right. _*

[*This is played behind a gauze curtain, in flickering, constantly interrupted light. Only blacks and whites are seen. In other words, here we have a plastic motion picture. The rattle of the projection machine is heard throughout the scene.*

[*THE JANE, dressed in a Spanish costume, with large flowered shawl tightly draped around her body, high coiffure, carved comb, etc., is posing on top of the stairs. Her body is flexed, her head thrown back. She is smoking a cigarette.*

[*“RAMON NAVARRO” is at the foot of the stairs, strumming a soundless guitar. His dress is that of a toreador.*

[*THE JANE’S voice and movements are heard, while “NAVARRO” is silent all the while. Even his movements are without sound.]*

THE JANE: [*Spreading her arms.*] That night. Unable to resist temptation, unable to still the fevered call of her heart—within her the hot blood of a half-caste mother, of a father no one knew—the Donna Carmencita steals from her maidenly bed to seek the hungry arms of her waiting lover . . .

[*Runs down the stairs, into "NAVARRO'S" arms. A mad kiss.*]

THE BOOKKEEPER: [*Who can not be seen just now.*] What you so quiet for, li'l lady? Come on, put your head on my shoulder . . . yeah, like this . . .

THE JANE: [*Continuing the scene.*] Desire! Forgetfulness in the bliss of those flaming stolen moments. Kisses . . . impatient . . . demanding. . . . While the harvest moon paints silver the proud turrets of the ancestral castle, and all Seville sleeps . . .

[*Suddenly she tears herself away from "NAVARRO."* Dashes up a few steps; he runs after her, seizes her in his arms. Again a kiss.]

And until the first rosy rays of a Spanish sun came to tear asunder the sheltering veils of dawn, she was his . . . his . . . For walls do not a prison make, nor iron bars a cage!

[*He crushes her to him, they sink down on the bench.*

[*The light goes out; when it is on again, the movie interior is seen once more. THE JANE'S head is still on THE BOOKKEEPER'S shoulder.*]

THE BOOKKEEPER: . . . the Rolls-Royce, that's what . . . Yes, ma'am!

THE JANE: [*Gasps.*] Oh . . . !

THE BOOKKEEPER: [*Himself excited now. Seizes her arm. Speaks in a rapid, jerky manner.*]
An' diamonds . . . I'll get . . . you a house
. . . in Hollywood . . . a large house . . . a
garden . . . a swimmin' pool . . . horses . . .
I'll . . .

THE JANE: [*Cries out.*] When . . . ?

THE BOOKKEEPER: Soon. . . .

THE JANE: [*She has risen now.*] When?
When . . . ?

THE BOOKKEEPER: Any time . . .

THE JANE: [*Quivering.*] Now! !

THE BOOKKEEPER: [*Springing up.*] Now . . .
Right now . . . We'll get a car . . . An auto-
mobile . . . You won't never go home again
. . . Hollywood . . . What you say . . . ?

THE JANE: Anywhere you want . . . Just take
me . . . I . . . Gawd! Anywhere at all! I don't
care. . . . Hurry!

PART II

Five

[A street. It is evening. A suggestion of a high wall in the back. There are no windows or doors visible, but toward the Right end of the stage the dim-lit, curtained windows of a pool-parlor are seen. There are two of these windows, both labelled "Pocket Billiards." A closed door between them.]

[Somewhat off the center of the stage, toward the Left, there is a street lamp. Under it a soap-box, on which THE JANE is sitting. The LADY FRIEND is standing near, looking at her.]

THE LADY FRIEND: What a dope! That's what you get for bummin' 'round with a feller without bein' married to 'im . . . Not even an engagement ring! Well, now you got it!

THE JANE: That one evenin'!

THE LADY FRIEND: That one evenin' . . . Just the same—you an' him, in that stock-room . . . Like you're tellin' me . . . If he wasn't a thief an' they wouldn't 'ave arrested 'im, you'd 'ave run away with 'im, too . . .

THE JANE: I would 'ave . . . ! Still, that was the only time. In the stock-room!

THE LADY FRIEND: An' . . . o' course . . . !

THE JANE: Well, we was genuinely in love! We stayed a long time. Then me an' the Bookkeeper. . . .

LADY FRIEND: [*Contemptuously.*] A four-flush-in' bookkeeper. A bookkeeper what goes an' steals a car.

THE JANE: No. He didn't steal it an' he ain't a thief. He just borrowed it. So we could go to Hollywood. We woulda sent money to the guy what owned it, once we made lots in the movies. . . . [*Silence.*] That's the way we made it up, sittin' in the movies . . . Then we went out an' he jus' went to a car like he owned it . . . an' we beat it! It was fun. . . . I was terrible scairt, o' course, but it was fun . . .

LADY FRIEND: [*With a sarcastic laugh.*] Fun! You can keep it! It's a wonder they didn't lock you up, too.

THE JANE: Yeah! But the Bookkeeper said he had the car already when he met me.

LADY FRIEND: Well, you're in for it, now! You can't go home, that's a cinch. Your Ma would choke you. She knows.

THE JANE: I know she knows.

LADY FRIEND: An' your boss, too!

THE JANE: Yeah, he come to the police-station
. . . It was fierce . . . He gimme the bounce
right then an' there . . .

[Buries her face in her hands. Begins to cry.]

LADY FRIEND: You bawlin' 'cause you lost your
job?

THE JANE: No . . . It's the Bookkeeper . . .
They wouldn't lemme speak to 'im . . . He was
right there at the station . . . Then they took
'im away . . .

LADY FRIEND: Sure. To jail.—So what you
gonna do now?

THE JANE: I don't know.

LADY FRIEND: You do what I'm tellin' you.
. . . I seen your steady go in there . . . *[Points
to door of the pool-parlor.]*

THE JANE: Aw . . .

LADY FRIEND: Well, you go in an' get 'im . . .
An' then talk to 'im . . .

THE JANE: I don't wanna!

LADY FRIEND: Aw, you gimme a pain! It ain't
what you want . . . What else is there you can

do? You ain't got a place to go to . . . No job, an' you can't show up home . . . Maybe the Bookkeeper is gonna marry you, eh?

THE JANE: No! An' I wouldn't even ask 'im to.

LADY FRIEND: Bet your life not! His kind don't marry— It's diff'rent with your steady. Don't worry, he'll fall for the story. I know plenty o' girls got away with that.

THE JANE: [*Suddenly mounts the soap-box. Clings to the lamp-post.*] I won't. I don't care. I don't wanna get married! I don't wanna be washin' dishes an' cookin' an' cleanin' house . . . I'm young . . .

LADY FRIEND: You gotta get married. You gotta.

THE JANE: An' kids . . . an' always one feller . . . No Bookkeeper . . . No nothin' . . . Whadda I gotta get married for? Who's gonna make me?

LADY FRIEND: An' who ain't gonna? You'd be surprised. Once the story leaks out . . . You got caught, see? Gawd! All the neighbors, an' your people, an' girls in the block . . . Strangers, too . . .

[*Pause.*]

Once you got a husban', everythin's diff'rent. Then you're all right again. You get married!

THE JANE: [*Limp, hopeless. In a pleading, hollow voice:*] That's the only way to be all right with people? I gotta?

LADY FRIEND: You get married!

THE JANE: An' give up everythin'? An' never see the Bookkeeper?

LADY FRIEND: You do what's right, an' get respectable again . . . [*Reaches for her arm.*] Aw, come on! Don't be standin' there so dum'! You go an' tell 'im . . . He'll swallow it red hot. . . .

THE JANE: [*Submits. Steps down from the box.*] But howda I know he will? After I tell 'im 'bout the car . . . an' the Bookkeeper . . . an' . . .

LADY FRIEND: Work it easy! Cry a lot . . . How can he tell the diff'rence?

[THE JANE *still hesitates.*]

LADY FRIEND: Aw, snap into it!

[*She fairly drags THE JANE across the stage, to the door of the pool-parlor. There she opens the door, shoves THE JANE through it.*]

Go on . . . an' easy . . .

[*The door shuts behind THE JANE. For a second or two the LADY FRIEND gazes at the door, then starts away. After a while the door opens again. First THE JANE comes out, then, slowly, THE GUY. Ribald, jeering laughter follows him. The door slams shut.*

[*THE GUY is in shirtsleeves, hatless, with cue stick in hand. He is cross. Faces THE JANE.*]

THE GUY: [*Sharply.*] Well?

THE JANE: [*Timidly.*] I must speak to you . . .

THE GUY: You coulda waited . . . Hadda make a damn fool o' me in fron' o' the gang, runnin' in after me . . .

THE JANE: [*As before.*] I hadda speak to you . . .

THE GUY: Well, shoot! [*Just discovering it:*] Holy gee! You look like somethin' the cat drug in . . . !

THE JANE: I know . . . I must look a sight . . . I wasn't home since last night . . .

THE GUY: [*With quick, instantly resentful interest.*] Where was you . . . ?

THE JANE: At the station-house . . .

THE GUY: The police . . . ? !

THE JANE: Yeah!

[THE GUY *makes a threatening gesture.*]

THE JANE: [*Cowering.*] Don't. . . . I ain't to blame They caught 'im with a stolen car

THE GUY: Caught who?

THE JANE: The Bookkeeper A feller in our buildin' An' an' I was with 'im

THE GUY: [*Grips her arm.*] Joy ridin'? !

THE JANE: No, not joy ridin' [*Rapidly.*] I hadda work late An' I had that date with you an' I was in a terrible hurry to get home So the Bookkeeper he said he had a car An' a cop caught us

THE GUY: [*In a dark, low voice.*] Where'd he catch you?

THE JANE: In the park. When we stopped

THE GUY: [*Towering above her.*] What'd you stop for?

THE JANE: [*Confused.*] He we he had trouble with the engine That's all You don't think

THE GUY: An' ?

THE JANE: An' a cop caught us The Book-

keeper couldn't show no card . . . Well, the bus wasn't his . . . An' they took us in . . .

THE GUY: An' kep' you?

THE JANE: Not long, though . . . My boss came, too . . . [*Breaks down. Her face is again buried in her palms.*]

THE GUY: [*Stands there for a while. Then, dryly.*] Well, if they let you off, what you bawlin' for?

THE JANE: I got the bounce . . . Just 'cause I was in a hurry to get to you . . . !

THE GUY: Aw, the hell with that . . . You can get plenty other jobs.

THE JANE: I can't go home, neither . . . Ma knows . . .

THE GUY: Well, if you tell 'er how it come about . . . *If it's straight!*

THE JANE: It's straight! . . . I wouldn't be lyin' to my . . . steady . . . !

THE GUY: Then you can go home 'an tell 'er . . . !

THE JANE: She won't lissen . . . Losin' my job . . .

THE GUY: She'll lissen!

THE JANE: I can't go home. . . .

THE GUY: What's stoppin' you?

THE JANE: It ain't only the job . . .

THE GUY: What then?

THE JANE: I can't go home . . . She'd kill me
if she found out . . .

THE GUY: [*Stares at her, puzzled.*] Huh?

THE JANE: It's terrible . . . Wisht I was dead
. . . [*She is crying again.*]

THE GUY: [*Looking at her; swallowing hard.*]
Lissen . . . ! Aw, what you mean? Lissen . . .

[THE JANE *nods silently.*]

THE GUY: Aw! You sure?

THE JANE: Gawd . . . I . . .

THE GUY: [*After a pause; suddenly.*] I don't
believe you . . .

THE JANE: What would I be sayin' it for?

THE GUY: There's other fellers. That Bookkeeper
. . . ? Just rode with 'im, eh?

THE JANE: That's all! To get to you in a hurry
. . . There ain't been nobody. You know! You're
my sweetheart. You know!

THE GUY: Aw . . . [*Silence. Gruffly:*] Well, what we gonna do now?

THE JANE: I can't go home . . .

THE GUY: [*Almost hysterically.*] I ain't gettin' married . . .

THE JANE: I never ast . . . I just went with you . . .

THE GUY: Marry . . . Ha! That'd be a hot one on me . . . !

THE JANE: [*Nearer him.*] Dearie . . . I'm scairt . . . [*Breaks down again.*]

THE GUY: [*Mopping his forehead.*] I . . . Lissen . . . Maybe . . . No, nothin'. . . . [*Half turning from her.*] Go on home . . . I'll see you in the mornin' . . .

THE JANE: How can I go home . . . ? My Ma . . .

THE GUY: Tell 'er . . . Tell 'er somethin' . . .

THE JANE: [*In an awed whisper.*] That we're engaged . . . ?

THE GUY: [*Now completely turns from her. He is silent for a while. Then, in a resigned, tired, blank voice:*] Go on home . . . !

[THE JANE *slinks off*. For a moment THE GUY stands there, looking at the windows of the pool-parlor. Then he pulls himself erect, evidently making up his mind to return to the game. Opens the door.

[Through the open door, a sudden chorus of mocking laughter. A few voices; then, together, a song: "Tum-tum-tee-tum . . ." etc., to the tune of "Here Comes the Bride."

[THE GUY steps back, staring through the door. Then he raises his cue-stick, poising it in midair for an instant, and hurls it through the glass window.]

THE GUY: [This is a wail; bitter, helpless:]
Goddamn it!

CURTAIN

INTERLUDE

INTERLUDE

[*Tenement houses, colorless, voiceless—THE JANE'S street.*

[*Only three women are to be seen on the street. They all look alike—slovenly, work-beaten, obese,—and they have grown to be part of the houses in which they live. Standing within the dwellings (or behind them, rather, for there is here the illusion of flimsiness, of cardboard fronts with painted crazy windows), merely the upper parts of these women's bodies are visible as they lean out through rents in the paper walls.*

[*These are the housewives. Breaking through so, they are doing their daily work: never-ending tasks done slowly, emotionlessly. Three women—cooking, washing, rocking a baby. The stove, the carriage and the tub are on the street, in view.*

[*THE JANE is standing near, her entire body visible.*]

FIRST MRS.: What you cookin' to-night, Missis?

SECOND MRS.: Cabbage! Corn' beef an' . . .
What you?

FIRST MRS.: Chicken. *Chicken!* My husban's crazy 'bout chicken . . .

SECOND MRS.: We too . . . we buy only the best of everythin' . . . Not that we don't put money in the bank, just the same!

FIRST MRS.: You gotta do that. For a rainy day . . . O' course, the children costs a lot—but, Gawd, what else you get so much fun outa as kids? [*Laughs. Points to THIRD MRS.*] The way her Mister feels about it, she says, the more the merrier! Let 'em come, says 'e!

THE JANE: [*Very colorlessly. She is not altogether in the conversation.*] I got a meat loaf to-day . . . Had chops yesterday . . . To-morrow, maybe, I'll get a steak . . . Or maybe chops again . . . I dunno . . .

FIRST MRS.: [*With an approving nod.*] Takes good care of 'er man! A good woman!

SECOND MRS.: [*Similarly.*] A good woman!
[*Silence.*]

FIRST MRS.: [*To SECOND MRS.*] An' what you think he brings home the other night? One o' them fancy boxes o' candy . . . "That for me?" says I, real surprised. "Who then?" he says. "You my sweetheart, even if we been married ten years. . . ."

SECOND MRS.: Wasn't that real sweet, now? My old man, he don't seem a day older, neither, than when we first met . . . Makin' a fuss over me an' jokin' roun' till I nearly bust laughin'. . . . Like two kids—that's us . . . Happy . . .

THE JANE: [*She speaks slowly, in an unconvinced, uncertain manner.*] A meat loaf to-day Chops yesterday . . . To-morrow a steak . . . He wants home-cookin' . . .

[*Now faster, as though trying to convince herself as well as the others.*] Nothin' like a home-cooked meal, ain't it true now? Nothin' like a home . . . an' peace an' bein' respected . . . an' . . . an' . . . not havin' nothin' to hide . . . Just a home an' husban' . . . lovin' . . . Then you ain't sorry 'bout nothin' . . . 'bout nothin'. . . .

[*Looks at them in triumph. The others nod.*]

FIRST MRS.: A home body . . .

SECOND MRS.: A good woman!

FIRST MRS.: They're pretty scarce nowadays—her kind . . .

SECOND MRS.: Girls don't never settle down. They're wild. . . .

FIRST MRS.: Can't appreciate a good home an' a good man . . .

SECOND MRS.: Now, my husban' . . . an' me
. . . Well, it's diff'rent with us . . .

FIRST MRS.: Hmmm!

[*Silence.*]

FIRST MRS.: My husban' . . .

SECOND MRS.: My husban' . . .

FIRST MRS.: My home . . .

SECOND MRS.: . . . an' the kids . . .

[*Again they speak. This time, however, their faces are turned straight ahead, and the expressions have changed. As though masks had been dropped. This is no longer conversation, small talk. Soliloquies now—the daily story, the fatiguing pattern of life. These women talk just to voice the questions arising within them. There is a resignation, a keening note all through.*]

FIRST MRS.: My husban' . . . I know by his eyes what he's thinkin' of . . . An' when he takes his hat an' goes out in the evenin', it's like he stuck a knife through me . . . An' I found that pitcher of the naked girl in his pocket . . . An' him holdin' 'er on his lap . . . Young ones they must be all the time . . . The way he made up to the Janitor's daughter . . . Young ones! I ain't young no more . . . An' I ain't got my looks. An' what can I do? He'd only beat me

again, or kick me out . . . Young girls all the time . . . Buyin' things for 'em . . . Never a present for me . . . Young girls . . . in his lap . . .

SECOND MRS.: My husban' . . . Weak he is an' tired. Weak an' tired an' quiet. He used to like to whistle. But he don't even speak no more . . . Never a word outa him . . . He just sits an' his eyes look empty an', Gawd be merciful, I can't help feelin' he's dyin' there in his chair . . . an' that every day he's a li'l more dead than he was day before . . . An' his lips keep on movin', an' never a sound outa them . . . I don't even know when he sleeps. . . . I go to bed, an' when I get up he's gone . . . an' I wonder if he talks at all when workin'—or just stands there by the machine, workin', workin' . . . ?

THIRD MRS.: [*Speaking for the first time.*] My baby . . . I didn't dare to tell my husban' there'll be a new one . . . He curses an' for days acts outa his head . . . Three, he says, an' four . . . An' here's another . . . 'There's other women,' he says, 'got more brains than you' . . . Brains! It's easy to have, all right, when you got the money . . . Be proud an' feel blessed, says the priest. Sure, he can say that—it ain't him gotta stand for my husban' goin' wild. . . . Like—I wanned 'em . . . Like I ast for 'em . . .

SECOND MRS.: An' the prices . . . Eggs an' meat an' coal . . . An' the Dutchman won't trust no more . . . If he at least had his job steady . . . An' what when we get real old? Gawd . . . ! You get old an' people don't give you jobs no more, an' rent goes on just the same, an' you gotta eat . . . an' dress . . . an' keep warm . . .

[THE FAST WOMAN enters. She is wearing clothes that are exaggeratedly stylish, of an elegance alien to the neighborhood. Her face is made up; she has a brazen, defiant air.]

FIRST MRS., SECOND MRS., THIRD MRS.:
[Stiffen. Their hostile glances go out to the FAST WOMAN. Scandalized gasps:] Ah!

[With eloquent contempt, they draw into the houses, leaving THE JANE alone with the FAST WOMAN.]

THE JANE: [Is bewildered. As the FAST WOMAN nears her, she instinctively gathers her skirt close to her and draws away . . .]

FAST WOMAN: [Halts. Furiously:] What's the matter? Am I lousy or somethin' . . . ?

[THE JANE does not answer.]

FAST WOMAN: I ain't respectable, eh? I ain't good . . . They passed you the high sign, eh? Well, you kin go to hell, like the rest of 'em!

THE JANE: I ain't got a thing 'gainst you . . .
I'm sorry if I got you sore . . . [*Softly.*] I usta
look like you, too . . . Don't think I didn't have
swell clothes . . . It didn't pay . . . no . . .
Just trouble, that's all . . . Clothes don't mean
so much once you got your husban' . . .

FAST WOMAN: [*Giggles.*] Well, ain't I married,
too? That don't stop me!

THE JANE: I'm satisfied. I'm all right. I'm sat-
isfied. I don't want a thing more . . . I wanna
have peace . . . Just bein' left 'lone . . .

FAST WOMAN: [*Shrugs. Starts off.*] A lot I care
. . . For my part . . . !

[*After a second or two, turns back. She is smiling.*]
You don't feel like comin' in my house for a minute,
maybe, . . . eh? I just bought a classy Charleston
. . . I'll play it off for you . . .

THE JANE: [*Fascinated.*] I ain't heard music
. . . gee, for awful long now . . . 'course we
got the radio . . . but that ain't the same
thing . . .

FAST WOMAN: Come on!

[THE JANE is hesitating, apparently. At this mo-
ment, THIRD MRS. enters, Right, pushing a
baby-carriage. She stops suddenly, staring at THE
JANE and FAST WOMAN.]

THE JANE: [*Wilts under the critical glance. To FAST WOMAN.*] No, I guess I can't. . . . No, I ain't goin' . . .

[FAST WOMAN *shrugs again; goes off, Left.*]

THIRD MRS.: Please, Missis, if it ain't askin' too much . . . could you watch my baby for a minute while I run over to the butcher's . . . ?

[THE JANE *slowly starts in her direction, eyes still following the FAST WOMAN. Before she gets very far, a piano starts going. The Charleston. THE JANE stops.*]

THIRD MRS.: Missis, please. . . .

[THE JANE *now shakes herself, lifts her head, goes to the baby-carriage. Stands motionless beside it. . . . The Charleston is very lively now . . .*]

THIRD MRS.: [*Sharply.*] You gotta rock 'im. . . .

[THE JANE *starts rocking the carriage indifferently, eyes in the direction of the piano.*]

THIRD MRS.: Yeah, like that . . .

THE JANE: [*Looks at the woman, who is all smiles now. She turns her back on the music. In a loud voice:*] Like this . . . Yeah! This is the way . . . [*Energetically rocks the carriage. The music goes on.*]

CURTAIN

PART
III

PART III

One

[Their home. The living-room. Two golden oak chairs and an unpainted kitchen table. An incongruously ornate radio cabinet, with a large, gilded loud-speaker on its top. Two doors, Left and Right.]

[THE GUY and THE JANE are seated at the ends of the table. He is reading a picture newspaper, she a copy of "True Stories." There is silence for a while. Then:]

THE GUY: *[Reading.]* "Money spent in Gay Life on Broadway, Kin Charge—John F. Mayburn, Industrial Magnate, Declared Incompetent—Prominent Revue Star Figures in Case." *[Looks up.]* Goddamn 'em! Us fellers work an' slave . . . For who? For them! For them to buy women with . . . If I could blow up the whole bunch . . .

[THE JANE lifts her head for a second; looks at THE GUY with a vacant, uncomprehending glance. Returns to her reading.]

THE GUY: [*Having turned several pages at random, reads aloud again:*] "The Superintendent of the West 64th Street apartment house identified the photograph of the mysterious blonde. Said pajama parties lasted till the wee hours. Partially clad women in drunken revels . . . chorus girls paid frequent visits, remaining for the night . . . artists' models among women he was often seen with . . ."

[*His eyes are glued to the paper. He bends forward as he eats up the words. Almost in a whisper:*]

Chorus girls . . . models . . .

[*He turns the paper to the light, and audience is permitted to see that the page is covered with pictures of women.*]

Some legs. . . .

[*Now again THE GUY looks at his wife; turns back to the page; looks at her once more. This is almost a comparison. For a while he studies THE JANE, eyes narrowed.*]

[*THE JANE, reading, sighs languorously. Licks her lips. Stretches.*]

THE GUY: [*Once more looks at the pictures, glances at THE JANE.*] Hot babies . . . Boy!
[*Moves uneasily on his chair. Studies his wife. Now he seems to have made up his mind.*]

Slowly:] Lissen . . . come on over here . . . sit on my lap a li'l . . .

THE JANE: [*Does not move.*] Uhuh! [*Continues reading.*]

[THE GUY *half rises, as though to go to her. Then he shrugs, returns to his pictures.*]

THE JANE: [*Reading, she sighs again, relaxes in her chair. Fusses with the neck of her dress. A shudder goes through her. She closes her eyes, sits that way for a while. Now she opens them again; looks at THE GUY. Suddenly, as though just remembering:] What did you say before?*

THE GUY: Who, me? Nothin'. . . .

THE JANE: 'Bout me sittin' in your lap? . . .

THE GUY: [*Without emphasis.*] No. . . .

[THE JANE'S face goes dead again. Her interest in the story is gone. She sits with hands motionless in her lap.

[THE GUY has now exhausted the newspaper. Idly turns pages; nothing seems to interest him any longer. Lets the paper drop to the floor; sits with a blank, emotionless face.

[The two have nothing to say to each other; no conversation. As they sit, they are facing the audience, with bored, empty countenances. Their si-

lence is heavy, oppressive, long—a plaint of dullness, of monotony—broken only by their yawns here and there.]

THE GUY: [*Idly looks at his watch.*] Nine-fifteen!

THE JANE: [*Promptly, but without interest.*]
WBX!

[THE GUY *yawns again; rises, goes to radio and plugs in.*]

THE RADIO: Haw-haw! Ha-ha! Evenin', folkses! How do, each an' every one! Some nifty li'l selection next, all right? Yes? No? The ayes have it . . . Righto! Moosick with a snap . . . Mr. La Mayo, at the piano, tells me I gotta ask you all to dance to this one . . . What you say, Friends? Come on, fellow husban's an' slaves, show the old lady you're still there with the old footwork . . . Le's go!

[THE JANE and THE GUY, *under the suggestion, slowly approach each other. He holds out his arms, and as the music comes again, they dance. A lively fox-trot. She closes her eyes. He kisses her . . .*

[*Just at the kiss, the music comes to an abrupt end. The dancers stop, rather shamefaced. That they are still embraced seems inertia more than anything else.*]

THE GUY: Well . . . you can still hoof it, all right . . .

THE JANE: You too! You led wonderful . . .
Like you usta . . .

THE GUY: Well . . . er . . . [*Slowly.*] Maybe we could go to the movies to-morrow . . . We ain't been a long time . . .

THE JANE: Oh, hon . . . !

[*She seems to be about to kiss him, when he suddenly takes away his arms. Moves farther from her.*]

THE GUY: I wanna get my pipe . . . [*Slowly goes into other room, through door Left.*]

[*THE JANE sighs with resignation; goes to the table. Before she has a chance to sit down, however, there is light knocking at door Right. THE JANE goes there, opens door.*]

THE FAST WOMAN: [*Sticking her head through the opening.*] Is 'e home?

[*THE JANE silently points to the other door.*]

THE FAST WOMAN: Oh! Then I ain't comin' in . . . I just wanned to tell you . . . I met a frien' o' yourn . . . It's the funniest thing . . . how we got talkin' 'bout you . . . I dunno . . . Anyway, he ast me to give you his regards . . .

THE JANE: It's a him? I guess you made a mistake . . .

THE FAST WOMAN: Maybe . . . He said his name is . . . Well, we call 'im Kid Applesauce . . . but he tole me to say it was the Bookkeeper ast for you . . . Like that . . . Bookkeeper . . .

THE JANE: [*Visibly excited.*] The Book . . .
. . . Where'd you meet 'im?

THE FAST WOMAN: On Broadway. Where you think? In a rum shop . . . Well, I just wanned to tell you. Any message . . . case I meet 'im again?

THE JANE: [*Slowly, taking the other's arm.*] Tell 'im . . . in case you meet . . . tell 'im I still . . . [*Quickly, nervously.*] No . . . Wait a minute . . . Say to 'im . . . if you wanna do me a real favor . . . that I didn't know who he was . . . See? Like that . . . I didn't know who he was at all . . .

THE FAST WOMAN: But, gee whiz . . . You seem to know, all right . . . He'd like to make a date!

THE JANE: Please . . . Just say that . . . say . . . that I forgot him complete . . .

[*Turns away. The FAST WOMAN, shaking her head, shuts door.*]

[THE GUY comes in, puffing on his pipe. Looks questioninglly at THE JANE, who is visibly upset. Then turns to THE RADIO, busies himself with the dials.]

THE RADIO: “. . . and that is life’s richest possession. The nest which a man builds for his woman, where he sits with her on long evenings, the glow of the fire on their faces, happy in each other’s company . . .”

THE JANE: [*Her shoulders are shaking. She is pale. Presses her palms to her temples. Now she hurries, almost runs, up to THE GUY, puts her arm around his neck. Quite hysterically:*] Dearie . . . please . . . lemme stay with you . . . This selection . . . ’bout the home . . . Like he was talkin’ of us . . .

THE RADIO: “. . . while the children play at their happy games close by. For what is life without children? What greater bliss and pride than that given by the soft, pink, warm body of a cooing babe . . .”

THE JANE: [*Her arms drop to her sides. Her face is ashen. Her voice shakes as she pleads:*] Le’s hear some other station. . . . I don’t wanna lissen to no lectures . . . Somethin’ lively . . .

[THE GUY does not reply. Now turns, is staring at the horn.]

THE RADIO: "A baby, held in a mother's tenderly loving arms . . ."

THE JANE: [*In a strangled voice.*] Please . . . sweetie . . . [*Backs to chair, sinks into it.*]

THE RADIO: "An infant, be he boy or girl, a baby with a gurgling little . . ."

[THE GUY *without warning sound or movement, suddenly knocks the horn from its place. It crashes to the ground; the voice dies with a hoarse, croaking sound.*]

[THE JANE *is trembling in her chair.*]

[THE GUY *leaps to her, savagely seizes her shoulder.*]

THE JANE: [*Faint.*] You . . . you gonna start that again . . . ?

THE GUY: [*Bursting out.*] You bitch! You dirty low . . .

THE JANE: [*Pleading in a low voice.*] Don't . . . You always keep on bringin' it up . . . I told you a million times . . . I told you . . .

THE GUY: [*Torturing her shoulder.*] You played me for a sucker! . . . You lied . . . you . . .

THE JANE: I didn't lie . . . I made a mistake . . . I was scairt . . .

THE GUY: You said there'd be the kid . . . I hadda marry you . . .

THE JANE: I thought so, too . . . Well, it's all the same now . . . It's too late . . .

THE GUY: [*With a terrible, savage laugh.*] Yeah, too late! An' I'm slavin' to keep up a home . . . an' where's my fun? . . . An' where's the girls? . . . An' the gang . . . ? I'm a goddamn slave . . . ! What for? That's what I wanna know . . . What for? [*Suddenly.*] The cops caught you in his car . . . What was you doin'?

THE JANE: [*Her teeth chattering in terror.*] Ain't I said it 'gain an' again? . . . Him an' me . . . just . . .

THE GUY: [*With uncontrollable fury.*] You gonna tell yet . . . I'll . . . You bitch!

[*With his clenched fist, strikes her full in the face. THE JANE screams, falls to the floor. There she writhes, moaning.*

[*THE GUY stands over her for a while, then struts into other room.*

[*Silence.*]

THE JANE: [*Writhing on the floor.*] He coulda been . . . he coulda been . . . The Bookkeeper . . . he coulda been . . . I coulda said he should

come . . . I coulda made a date . . . I coulda . . . [*She becomes silent again as THE GUY enters.*]

[*THE GUY comes in, hat on head. Paying no attention to THE JANE, he crosses to other door. A chair gets in his way, he kicks it aside with fury.*

[*But when he reaches the door, he stops, hand on the knob. He stands there for a while, his back to the audience. A long pause.*

[*Now THE GUY slowly comes away from the door. Sees the chair, lifts it, holds it in midair. Then neatly, carefully, he puts it in its place. Goes to radio cabinet, stoops to pick up the horn of the loud-speaker. Looks at it for a while, attempts to straighten it. Slowly places it back on top of the cabinet. While doing this, his back is to the audience once more. He speaks over his shoulder now . . .*]

THE GUY: Get up an' fix me a cup o' coffee. . . !

[*THE JANE slowly rises; still moaning, she drags herself to the kitchen door.*]

PART III

Two

[Almost at the end of the stage, Right, there is a conventional tenement-house door, facing the audience. Starting behind this, and running to the Left, a flight of stairs, leading to THE JANE'S apartment, or into its bedroom, rather. Midway between the lower door and the upper one, is a landing, with a third door on it, also facing front.]

[THE JANE'S bedroom appears as a box, with its front wall removed, showing two narrow beds, separated by space enough to allow people to walk between them. The side walls taper slightly toward the rear. The single door is on the back-wall. At the foot of the bed stands a chair, with a loud-ticking alarm clock on it. A gas-jet, flaring yellow, lights the room.]

[The bit of sidewalk in front of the house is deserted when the curtain rises. The door is shut. Upstairs, THE JANE is pacing up and down between the beds. From time to time she glances at the clock. She is alone.]

THE JANE: If they was to bring 'im home . . .

dead . . . a car run 'im over . . . If he was killed . . . [*Sits down on the edge of the bed, wringing her hands.*]

[*Silence.*]

Aw, what coulda happened? Nothin'! Soused, that's all . . . Wouldn't be the first time . . .

[*Looks at the alarm clock, holding it up to the light.*]

[Two-thirty . . . never been so late before . . . An' his pay with 'im, too . . .]

[*Strikes the edge of the bed with her fist.*]

Bet he spent it . . . Bet he spent it, the dirty bum! O Gawd, Gawd!

[*Incensed; croaking.*] Then he can try to stall off the grocer . . . an' the iceman . . . I'll be god-damn if I ask for more credit . . . I ain't got the face . . .

[*Silence. Now slowly, with increasing passion.*] What if he did get killed? Would I care . . . ? Well . . . he's my husban' . . . I'd feel terrible . . . It would break my heart . . . It's awful, thinkin' like that . . . I oughta be shot . . . Yeah, but it could be a accident . . . It ain't like you could help accidents . . . Did I push 'im under the car?—An' he's insured . . . Aw, I don't want the money . . . it ain't that . . . Just

. . . I could be free-like . . . Gee, I'd cry . . .
The neighbors would be lookin' . . . No, I
wouldn't . . . To hell with the neighbors. . . .
I'd laugh, even . . . Let 'im break his goddamn
neck . . . Who the hell cares? Lettim break it
good an' hard . . .

*[Stops talking. Sits with a hard face. Short pause.
After a few seconds of this, the FAST WOMAN
enters. She is with a young man. They come to
the front door.]*

FAST WOMAN: Shh! Be quiet, comin' in . . .

HER COMPANION: You sure . . . it's all right
. . . ? Your husban' . . . ?

FAST WOMAN: Don't be a sap . . . He don't
come home till mornin'. . . .

*[She opens the door. They enter. He is seen putting
his arm around her. She giggles. The door shuts.
As yet, they do not go upstairs. They remain be-
hind the door, hidden from the audience.]*

THE JANE: *[Who has heard the door shutting.]*
That's 'im now . . . *[Opens bedroom door,
peeps out. Evidently she sees the figures below,
although they are still hidden.]*

THE JANE: *[Drawing a deep breath.]* Ahhh!
[Silently watches the pair.] Takin' chances, 'cause
'er husban's on the nightshift . . . Some crust!

[Shuts door. Shakes her head. But next she smiles.] Damn' if I blame 'er . . .

[Shrugs, titters. Stands smiling for a while, then with air of mischief, opens door. She is spying again.]

Mmm . . . Boy . . . No wonder she's popular.
. . . Zzzzzz!

[Shivers slightly. But now she suddenly straightens. Shakes herself, as though trying to escape the spell. Decisively shuts the door.]

She's a nut! What's the use? They're all the same
. . . all men . . . An' I got mine. . . . *[Cynical laugh.]* Got 'im is right! . . . Sure . . . A
hell of a lot o' good it . . .

[Whispering this—an almost tragic note:] Ain't he
never gonna change? I'm tryin' . . . Gosh, I
can't do no more. . . . I give in to 'im . . . Is
he ever gonna forget the Bookkeeper?

[Slowly.] The Bookkeeper ain't no more . . .
Maybe he never was, neither . . . I hadda
chance again . . . No! It wouldn't help none
. . . I got a husban' . . . Maybe things ain't
honey an' cream . . . But he married me . . .
That's more'n a lot woulda done . . . The Book-
keeper woulda laughed . . . The way he could
laugh . . . Sent the blood all over you!

[*Emphatically, as though trying to convince herself.*] She can keep her good times! I'm all right! I got a husban'. . . . Drinks? That ain't nothin' . . . Nothin' much . . .

[*In a lower voice, as though questioning.*] Nothin' . . . ? The hell it ain't! It's a whole lot . . . I ain't gonna face the grocer . . . an' people . . . Let *him* do it!

[*She is silent. Puzzled.*] Good-lookin', though . . . The way he hugged 'er . . . She's got everythin' . . . Clothes . . . Good times . . . Broadway shows . . . rides . . .

[*Resentfully, with fury.*] If she comes in to see me, I'll throw 'er out . . . That's what . . . Throw 'er out . . . !

[*Jumps up; paces up and down. Occasionally glances at the clock.*

[*The FAST WOMAN and HER COMPANION now start up the stairs.*]

FAST WOMAN: Oh, what you care? Come on . . .
[*They enter her apartment. The door shuts.*]

[*Downstairs, THE GUY comes to the large door, with FIRSTWORKER of the factory scene. They are drunk, but not incoherently so.*]

THE GUY: Well, s'long! Jes's . . . ! Must be hell late . . .

WORKER: What you care? Scairt of your wife? She got you bulldozed! [*Laughs contemptuously.*]

THE GUY: Aw, who the hell is scairt of 'er? No woman can scare me . . . I can stay out all night if I feel like it . . . Stay out a week! Never show up no more! Wanna see? [*To prove his point, defiantly sits down on doorstep.*]

WORKER: Now you're talkin'! [*Seats himself next to the other. Long silence.*] If you ask me, I never doped out what the hell you got hitched for . . .

THE GUY: I was in Dutch. I hadda. I got stuck.

WORKER: [*With a whistle of astonishment.*] So that was it! . . . I was wonderin' . . . [*After a short pause. Slowly:*] Well, where's the kid?

THE GUY: There wasn't none . . . She put one over on me . . .

WORKER: Holy gee . . . Well, why don't you leave 'er?

THE GUY: Aw, we're married, see? . . . She cooks an' washes an' cleans up . . . it's too much trouble lookin' for a new place . . . eatin' in a

beanery . . . So I just stick . . . An' beat 'er when I get thinkin' . . .

WORKER: Sure . . . Well, I don't take no chances! I got a few babies on the string, but they ain't the kind . . . Fast dames!

THE GUY: Naw, I'm through with them things.

[*Silence. After a while:*] Fast babies, eh?

WORKER: Uhuh!

THE GUY: Warm babies, eh? Snappy like anythin'. . . .

WORKER: Not so bad . . . But you gotta be willin' to spend money on 'em . . . They don't give nothin' for nothin'. . . . [*Yawns, stretches. Rises to unsteady feet.*] Well, here's where I beat it! Any time you chuck your wife, we could hit it up to beat the band . . . Well, s'long!

THE GUY: [*Shakes hands with him without rising.*] Yeah . . . With them babies . . . The real kind. . . . S'long!

[*WORKER ambles off. THE GUY remains seated on the doorstep, vacantly staring before him.*

[*Upstairs, THE JANE is still sitting on the edge of her bed. Now she hears a phonograph going. Raises her head. Just then the FAST WOMAN*

dashes out of her apartment, rushes upstairs to THE JANE'S room.]

THE JANE: [*As the other enters.*] For the love o' . . . [*Rises, goes toward the visitor.*]

FAST WOMAN: [*Breathlessly.*] Lissen . . . He ain't home . . . ? No! Well . . . I wanna ask a favor . . . I . . . A frien' o' my frien' is comin' over . . . If you'd come down . . .

[THE JANE *stares at her in astonishment.*]

FAST WOMAN: Just a li'l party . . . I got drinks . . . We'd dance . . . Nice guys . . . Come on! An' we could fix the door—your husband would have to ring first . . . Come on!

THE JANE: [*As though in a trance.*] Fellers? A party? You kiddin' me?

FAST WOMAN: No . . . ! I . . . Honest . . . We'd have fun . . . Comin' . . . ?

THE JANE: [*Instinctively touches her hair; arranges her blouse.*] The Bookkeeper . . . [*Her arms drop.*] No, 'course 'tain't him . . . The Bookkeeper wouldn't come . . . He ain't no more . . . No, I'm not goin' . . . *No!*

[FAST WOMAN *withdraws. She is seen going down steps.*

[Downstairs, THE GUY enters the door, is coming up. The two meet on the middle landing.]

THE GUY: [Stops short.] H'llo . . . !

[The FAST WOMAN does not answer for a while. He continues to stand there, looking at her.]

FAST WOMAN: Well, what you lookin' at?

THE GUY: Nothin' . . . I . . . [Steps closer.]

[FAST WOMAN draws back; slams her door in his face.]

THE GUY: [Abashed, goes up a few steps. Stops:]
Don't hand out nothin' for nothin' . . . Like the rest!

[Slowly approaches his door. Hesitates; looks back.]
Fast . . . Warm . . . If I could break her goddamn neck . . .

[Enters the bedroom. THE JANE, who has been sitting on the edge of the bed—having left her position at the door some time ago—now looks up.]

THE JANE: A fine time to . . .

THE GUY: Dry up . . . !

[She says nothing in reply. Slips off her dress with a single tearing motion, kicks off her shoes, throws herself into the bed as she is, in her underwear.]

THE GUY *simply jerks out of his coat, falls onto his own bed, which is next to the wall. First, however, he turns the gas jet very low. There is silence.*]

THE JANE: [*Sits up suddenly.*] I don't have to stand for it. . . . There's plenty of other men. . . .

THE GUY: Huh?

THE JANE: There was the Bookkeeper once . . . There can be . . .

THE GUY: [*Sits up quickly. Furiously:*] The Bookkeeper . . . [*With a contemptuous snicker.*] Aw, who the hell would want slobs like you? They gotta come snappy and fast. . . .

[*She starts to cry. He turns toward the wall. THE JANE is softly moaning, sitting up in bed.*]

[*THE GUY is now asleep, snoring lightly. On the wall above his bed appears a shadow—the silhouette of a naked woman. Then that of another, still another—a procession of sinuously moving naked women.*]

THE JANE: [*Still moaning softly, bends over THE GUY's form.*] Wouldn't they? What's the matter with me? Snappy an' fast . . . Wouldn't the Bookkeeper . . . ?

[Jumps out of bed. Raises her fists above her head with a muffled cry. Quickly starts to dress. Then once more she bends over THE GUY; opens the door and disappears. It can not be seen where she goes, for the stage suddenly becomes dark and only the bedroom remains lighted by the flickering light of the gas-jet. But there is sudden laughter, indistinct voices, the music of a phonograph—as though a door had been opened.]

THE GUY: *[Tossing on his bed—with a troubled groan.]* Ugh!

[The naked shadows move faster and faster on the wall.]

CURTAIN

PART
IV

PART IV

One

[*Night on Broadway. The anarchy of electric energy. In the air, a million bulbs flashing colors. Far back, a suggestion of theatres: a formal entrance, with flaming letters above it, a mass of canvas scenery at crazy angles, an asbestos curtain,—so marked,—draped perhaps above them. At all remaining spots, huge posters, bearing names: Belasco, Shubert, Cohan, Hit, Showing, Theatre Advertising signs: Tobacco, Drink, Auto, Chew, Read, Go.*

[*At the two extreme ends of the stage, farthest front, two very large gasoline pumps, with the characteristic dial and drum, are being cranked all through the scene, although it can not be seen what they are filling.*

[*Single, heavily-tired automobile wheels, with taximeters floating above them on slender rods, continue to whirl across the stage at intervals. The rest of the machine is never visible.*

[*In the center of the stage, a piano, with a revolving stool in front of it. A young pianist, in shirt-*

sleeves, is seated here, surrounded by two or three men,—also coatless,—and a large, florid woman, spectacularly dressed.

[Far to the Left, well in front, is a department-store counter, with a show-case behind it. In the case are fur coats, hats, dresses. On the counter, piled high, loosely hanging over the edges, many yards of brilliantly colored silk. Much lace. A clerk of the floor-walker type, with a flower in his buttonhole, wing collar, long tight coat, stands behind the counter, flashing the silken things as he turns them over and over.

[Well to the Right, also front, there is a glittering, silver-laden table. A pink-shaded lamp on it. Many dishes, glasses, bottles. A champagne cooler on the floor. Two chairs opposite each other. THE JANE and the SUGAR DADDY are seated. A waiter is at attention, a head-waiter is hovering about. A silken screen and a palm-tree behind the table.

[At the rise of the curtain, the large woman is singing.]

SINGER: *[In a cracked, coon-shouting voice.]*

I'm all alone since last you said good-bye—
I think o' you an' laugh for fear I'll cry . . .
You never said you're gonna break my heart.
I'm awful blue . . . What shall I do . . .

When I see the . . .

PIANIST: [*Bangs away energetically. Shouting:*]
Atta girl! Again, now . . . !

SINGER: [*Louder now.*] You never said you're
gonna break my heart . . .
I'm awful blue . . .

THE GANG: [*The three men around the piano.*]
I'm awful blue . . .

SINGER: [*With a helpless, imploring gesture.*]
What shall I do . . . ?

THE GANG: I'm askin' you. . . .

THE SINGER: When I see the tra-a-a-in . . .

[*She draws this out endlessly. The next words are never heard, as an unseen orchestra suddenly begins a lively, catchy, musical-comedy air. This is not jazz!*]

SIX CHORUS GIRLS: [*Dressed as silken vagabonds, prance across the stage, singing off key to the music.*] La-la-la-la. . . . Tra-la-la-la . . .
Tra-la-la-la . . .
We're gypsies . . .

[*SIX MEN in evening clothes, swinging their canes, rush after the chorus girls.*]

THE SINGER: [*Her voice rises above the din for a moment.*] I'm blue, but true . . .
True blue to you . . .

[*A group of laughing, shoving young people scamper across the stage. The jazzy strains of a band somewhere accompany them.*]

Faster . . . faster. . . . Hurry . . . hurry . . .
hurry . . .

[*They rush off.*]

THE JANE: [*She is dressed in a scintillating golden metal-cloth dress, high-heeled brocade pumps; a befurred evening cloak draped loosely around her shoulders. She is obviously tipsy. Raises her glass, lets it drop. Shrilly:*] More!

SUGAR DADDY: [*A caricature of his type—fat, heavy-faced, past middle age. Very sleek, very bald. He is wearing a dinner jacket. Bends across the table.*] What for? You got loads here . . . !

THE JANE: [*Shouting.*] More . . . gimme more . . . I don't wanna miss nothin' . . .

SUGAR DADDY: [*Beckoning to head waiter:*] More! Pile 'em on . . . !

HEAD WAITER: [*Bows. Snaps his fingers to waiter.*] More!

[*WAITER rushes away.*]

THE JANE: [*Idly digs her fork into food before her; pushes the plate away.*] Aww . . . More!

SUGAR DADDY: You won't even eat what's here . . . !

THE JANE: [*With drunken stubbornness.*] More . . . ! Don't hold out nothin' on me . . .

[WAITER *brings the food; it is placed before* THE JANE. *Waiters withdraw.*]

THE JANE: [*Gloats over the food, caresses the dishes, but does not eat.*] So . . . So! It's mine . . .

[*Long pause. Then:*] You know, I usta cook . . . I usta! Stand over the stove . . . Ha! Ain't that a scream? Me . . . I usta cook. . . .

SUGAR DADDY: Now I'm buyin' your food . . .

THE JANE: I can get lots to buy me . . . anythin' I want . . . Look a' me! [*Staggers to her feet, throws off the cloak.*] Look a' me! I belong here . . . I'm as good as any. . . . They couldn't tell the diff'rence, could they?

SUGAR DADDY: You're better'n any . . .

[*Rises, bends across the table, attempts to draw her into his lap.*]

THE JANE: [*Shakes him off. Sinks into her chair. Her self-assurance is gone. In a pleading, doubting voice.*] They couldn't tell . . . could they? That

I'm just a fake . . . That I'm just a model . . . workin' in the lonjrie . . . ? A fancy lonjrie model . . . runnin' wild . . . ? They can't tell, lookin' at me!

SUGAR DADDY: [*Laughs in a suggestive manner. His hands reach out for her.*] Not 'less you show 'em . . .

THE JANE: [*Eludes the touch. Very earnestly, anxiously:*] Could they think I'm a actress or in the chorus, eh? Or take me for a movie star . . . ? Lissen . . . If I was to meet somebody . . . a special frien' o' mine . . . could he find me out?

SUGAR DADDY: You talkin' o' that goddamn Bookkeeper again . . . ?

THE JANE: [*Stands up. Throws back her head, her arms are crossed on her breast. Wailing:*] Oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh . . . Where's the Bookkeeper . . . ?

[SUGAR DADDY *dashes to her, tries to force her into the chair again.*

[*Just now the SIX CHORUS GIRLS prance across the stage again. The SIX MEN trot along beside them.*]

THE JANE: [*Tearing away from the SUGAR DADDY, she makes a dash for the line. Several*

escape her, but she succeeds in catching the last MAN. Clinging to his sleeve:] The Bookkeeper . . . You seen 'im?

HEADLESS MAN: [*Laughs.*] Sure . . . Just left 'im at the morgue . . . !

A CHORUS GIRL: [*Pulling the man away.*] Made a swell corpse . . . ! [*They run off, together with the others.*

[*The SUGAR DADDY is again at THE JANE's side.*]

SUGAR DADDY: Come on, for the lova Mike . . . You're soused!

THE JANE: They're kiddin' me . . . He ain't dead . . . [*Bursts into hiccoughing, intoxicated sobs. Her head and arms are hanging.*]

SUGAR DADDY: Come on!

THE SINGER: [*Who has been shouting "I'm blue!" in fits and starts, now lays a hand on THE JANE's arm. Oozing with sympathy.*] Aw, dearie, ain't you found 'im yet?

THE JANE: [*Bends her head to the large woman's shoulder. Weeping:*] He's just hidin' . . . Like I saw 'im comin' . . . Lots o' times . . . only he don't never get here . . .

THE SINGER: [*Abruptly returns to the piano. Takes up the song.*] I'm blu . . . hoooo. . . .

[SUGAR DADDY *drags* THE JANE away. They stagger toward Left.

[*All the people on the stage now group themselves along the edge of the stage, facing the audience. Fingers are pointed; there are smiles, shouts, waving of hands. Cheers. Enthusiastic, awed, envious "Oh's" and "Ah's."* THE JANE and the SUGAR DADDY *are in front.*]

THE JANE: Oooh! That's her . . . she's playin' on the roof. . . . [*Shouts. All eyes are following some invisible person.*] Gee . . . ah . . . that French girl . . .

[*As before.*] He . . . You seen 'im? The richest bootlegger . . .

[*As before.*] That's . . . Look at 'er, quick! Got divorced last week . . .

[*As before.*] I . . . Quick, you're missin' him . . .

[*The mob is scattering, some evidently following the unseen celebrities.*]

THE JANE: Aw . . . Famous people . . . [*Cries out.*] I wanna be like 'em . . . I wanna be some-thin' . . . Not just a fake model . . . Then he

can come . . . He ain't gonna hide then . . .
He . . .

[*The counter and the show window catch her eyes. She clings to the SUGAR DADDY.*] Buy me . . .
Lots! I wanna be swell . . . I wanna look the
part . . . Lots!

[*The SUGAR DADDY is reluctant, but she is carrying him with her, to the counter.*

[CLERK bows.]

THE JANE: Lots . . . !

[CLERK looks questioningly at SUGAR DADDY.

[SUGAR DADDY resignedly motions him to go ahead.]

THE JANE: Everythin' . . . I wanna ride on top,
too . . . quick . . . !

[CLERK feverishly piles furs and silks and strings of pearls, hats, etc., before THE JANE.]

THE JANE: [Rummaging delightedly.] More!
. . . The best . . . !

[CLERK piles on more. Shoes, gloves . . .]

THE JANE: [*Things have fallen to the floor about her. She is treading on silk.*] The newest . . . !
More . . . ! [*Suddenly bends to the CLERK. In*

a loud whisper.] I gotta have 'em . . . I'm waitin' for somebody . . . I gotta look swell when he comes . . .

[*A veritable shower of glittering stuff now. THE JANE wallows in the silks, the laces, she bathes in them, rubs her face against the softness of the fabrics, with little inarticulate animal cries of delight.*]

THE JANE: More! More! More!

SUGAR DADDY: [*Tossing bills to the CLERK.*] Send them!

THE JANE: No . . . I'm takin' 'em . . . Everythin' . . . [*Clasps an armful to her bosom; all she can carry. Struggles to take along more. Running toward the center of the stage,—yards of silk and lace trailing after her,—she cries:*] Look! Look at me! . . . I'm swell . . . I got class . . . Look! Tell the Bookkeeper . . .

A STROLLER: [*A rough-looking individual, in a cap.*] Aw, the Bookkeeper is in jail . . .

THE JANE: [*Not listening to him. At top of her voice:*] The Bookkeeper . . . He can come now . . . Where's the Bookkeeper?

A WOMAN: [*Shrilly.*] Whee! Look at 'er! She's off again . . .

[*The crowd collects around THE JANE now. This is in the center of the stage.*]

SUGAR DADDY: [*Tugging at her.*] Come on! Stop makin' a scene . . .

THE JANE: [*Breaking away from him.*] The Bookkeeper . . . Where is 'e? Where's the Bookkeeper . . . ?

A VOICE: He went nuts . . . Got 'im in the bug-house!

ANOTHER VOICE: Give us a speech . . .

[*They all rush at THE JANE. She is crushed against the piano, lifted to its top. There she stands, still hugging her possessions.*]

VOICE: Speech!

SUGAR DADDY: Get offa there . . . ! [*Is trying to drag her down. She resists him.*] To hell with ya . . . ! Nut! [*Goes off.*]

VOICES: Speech . . . !

THE JANE: [*Looks around helplessly.*] The Bookkeeper . . . That's all I wanna know. Where is the Bookkeeper?

VOICES: [*Rising out of the chorus of jeers, cat-calls, laughter and shrill whistling.*] He beat it to China . . . He's dead . . . They hung 'im . . .

I got 'im at home on the Victrola . . . Now you see 'im, now you don't . . . ! In the garbage can . . . He's dead . . . !

THE JANE: [*Sobbing.*] The Bookkeeper. . . .

[*Jeers again. A policeman comes, swinging his stick. The people gradually disperse, followed by the policeman. Only a few remain, silently grinning up at THE JANE. Finally she is alone. The lights of the street have become dim, the sounds have died away. It is much darker now on the stage.*]

THE JANE: [*Alone on top of the piano, she is sobbing. Now she stands with her arms folded, head hanging. Slowly, awkwardly, gets off the piano. The silks hamper her, she flings the riches from her.*

[*Now she is on the ground. The cloak has fallen from her shoulders. She comes forward, stands there a while, slowly begins to unfasten her dress. Starts to slip it off her shoulder.*] What's the use? I'm just a bum model . . . underwear an' fancy . . .

[*Her shoulder is bare. She tears off one shoe.*

[*A TAXI DRIVER, in uniform, enters. Goes up to her.*]

TAXI DRIVER: Taxi, lady?

THE JANE: [*Shakes her head. Then she looks at him. Suddenly screams.*] Eeee! The Bookkeeper!

THE BOOKKEEPER: [*First looks around furtively. Puts a finger to his lips.*] Ssh! Not so loud . . . Yeah, I'm the bookkeeper . . . Who are . . . ? [*Goes closer.*] Oh . . . You, eh? You changed, all right . . . Well, what you know!

THE JANE: The Bookkeeper . . . !

THE BOOKKEEPER: Naw,—I'm drivin' a cab now . . . Well . . . ! [*Pause.*] I suppose you're goin' home . . . Come on, I won't charge you for the ride . . . It's on me! Old pals, eh? . . . Well, where you live?

THE JANE: [*Laughs hysterically.*] That's funny . . . My Gawd, that's funny . . . asking me where I live . . . Him askin' where I live . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: Oh . . . !

[*Starts off, indicating that she is to follow him. Without attempting to pick up her cloak, her shoe,—or any of the finery, for that matter,—she goes out slowly, a few steps behind THE BOOKKEEPER, who does not turn back at all.*]

CURTAIN

PART IV

Two

[*A very small furnished room. One white, enameled double bed, a dresser with a cracked mirror above it, a small table, on it a pressed-glass vase with artificial flowers. A wall-wardrobe, open, showing THE BOOKKEEPER'S belongings in confusion. One chair, a door, a window.*]

[*This is where THE BOOKKEEPER lives. Just now he is lying on the bed, fully clothed. His hands are under his head; he is staring at the ceiling. THE JANE is sitting at the table, idle, with an expressionless face. She is still wearing the evening gown of the preceding scene, but the gown's freshness is gone. It is soiled, crumpled, torn even, as though she had not taken it off since her meeting with THE BOOKKEEPER. Her hair is untidy; there is no make-up on her face.*]

[*Silence for a long while.*]

THE BOOKKEEPER: [*Propped on his elbow, he turns to her.*] I told you it wouldn't be no Waldorf . . . Four dollars a week . . . Six she's gonna charge now that you're livin' here . . .

[THE JANE *does not answer. She is slowly rocking back and forth.*]

[*Questioningly.*] That is . . . if you gonna stay . . . ?

THE JANE: I'm stayin' . . . !

THE BOOKKEEPER: Well . . . you sure, now? You don't wanna go back to that swell . . .

THE JANE: I'm stayin' here.

THE BOOKKEEPER: [*Sits up.*] Lemme get your stuff, then! You can't be wearin' that dress forever.

THE JANE: [*Looks at her dress. Indifferently runs her hands over it, as though to smooth away the wrinkles. Shrugs.*] It's all right . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: The hell it's all right. You had it on for three days now. What you 'xpect to do, sit in the room all your life? You can't show up on the street in that . . .

THE JANE: I don't wanna show up on the street.

THE BOOKKEEPER: Never?

[THE JANE *shrugs.*]

THE BOOKKEEPER: [*Sits on the edge of the bed now.*] Aw, I'll call for your things . . . Or, if you want me to, I could bring home a dress . . .

Nothin' swell, o' course, but . . . Just so you can move outa the . . .

THE JANE: [*Decisively.*] No! I'm keepin' this dress on me . . . You lemme alone!

[*Silence. THE BOOKKEEPER stretches out on the bed once more. THE JANE stares ahead of her, with vacant eyes. Slowly she begins to speak:*] You look like 'im an' sometimes it's like I heard 'im talkin' . . . but . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: Aw, be yourself!

THE JANE: [*Paying no attention to him.*] Last night I looked at you in bed . . . when you was sleepin' . . . I coulda swore it was the Bookkeeper . . . Then you woke up an' looked at me . . .

[*Silence. Then:*] You ain't *him*, that's all.

THE BOOKKEEPER: Who then?

THE JANE: How should I know? A fake, maybe . . . No . . . I dunno.

THE BOOKKEEPER: [*Slowly; his voice muffled.*] It's just that I'm older . . . Changed, you could say . . . I been in jail a coupla times . . . I had my troubles . . . So now I'm settled . . . I don't want no more trouble . . .

THE JANE: The Bookkeeper didn't care . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: Yeah, that's what's the matter . . . I used to be wild . . . Didn't give a hang . . . I got more sense 'n that now. Well, I suppose it's just that I ain't a bookkeeper no more . . . I'm a chauffeur . . . that's all . . .

THE JANE: You're a chauffeur. The Bookkeeper was the Bookkeeper. He was more, too . . . Everybody!

[*The scene suddenly becomes dark. When the lights go on, after some time, the room's complexion is altered. The position of the table has changed, the chair is on the other side of the window. Clothes are strewn all over the place. On the bed is a simple little dress of dark color, laid out flat. THE JANE is leaning against the wall. She is still wearing the evening gown,—now dirtier than ever. THE BOOKKEEPER is seated on the chair; in his shirt-sleeves now.*]

THE JANE: [*Dully.*] Let's you an' me commit suicide together . . . Kill each other . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: Are you dippy for good? What got that idea in you now?

THE JANE: I had it for long. . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: That's 'cause you go crazy sittin' in this damn room all day . . . If you was

to take off that rag an' put on the dress I brought you . . . [*Points to the dress on the bed.*]

THE JANE: No!

THE BOOKKEEPER: If you looked decent, we could get out o' this room . . . We could get a place with a kitchen . . . You could keep house . . . That wouldn't be so bad, would it?

THE JANE: You an' me . . . keep house . . . ? I did that once . . . when I was married . . . I went away to look for the Bookkeeper . . . I ain't gonna do that with you. . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: Well, what else did you 'xpect when you had me bring you here a week ago?

THE JANE: [*More and more intensely.*] The Bookkeeper promised me a car an' a house an' Hollywood . . . Where's that garden? Where's the swimmin' pool? Where's the Rolls-Royce . . . [*With a shriek.*] Eeee! . . . You fake, you fake . . . What'd you do with the Bookkeeper . . . ?

[*The scene is suddenly darkened. When the lights are on once more, the room is in somewhat better order. That is to say, things are in their places, although THE JANE'S discarded evening dress is in a crumpled heap on the floor. There are two chairs next to the table.*]

[THE GUY and THE JANE are alone in the room. THE BOOKKEEPER is absent. THE JANE is wearing the very plain dress. She and THE GUY are seated opposite each other, at the table.]

THE JANE: [Without conviction.] It was real sweet of you to come an' see me . . .

THE GUY: [His appearance indicates a certain prosperity. His clothes pressed, shoes shined, hair combed to an oily respectability, he sits playing with the jewelled emblem on his substantial watch-chain. He does not look at THE JANE as he says:] Well, I wanned to see how you're feelin' . . .

THE JANE: How'd you know I was here?

THE GUY: Oh, I found out . . . People know . . . !

THE JANE: People know everythin' . . . too much . . .

THE GUY: Yeah, you can't get away from that . . . They know, all right!

[Silence. He looks about the room:] This ain't what you might call much of a place. . . .

THE JANE: [Indifferently.] It's all right. . . .

THE GUY: You musta had it better'n this, too . . . From what I heard . . .

THE JANE: [*As before.*] I had it better . . .

THE GUY: [*With an embarrassed attempt at lightness.*] Worse, too, eh? With me, f'r instance. . . .

THE JANE: Aw, it wasn't so bad with you . . . not always . . .

THE GUY: Not till you didn't get tired of it . . . [*Silence. Slowly, with no sign of resentment.*] It's the Bookkeeper you livin' with, eh?

THE JANE: [*Colorlessly.*] Yeah . . .

THE GUY: [*Without emotion.*] Yeah!

THE JANE: [*Looks up at him.*] You don't care?

THE GUY: Can't say I like it so much, but . . . Well, it can't be helped no more, I guess.

THE JANE: It wouldn't be no use . . . [*Unexpectedly bursting out.*] Why didn't you stop me? Why didn't you come after me . . . ?

THE GUY: In a way, I wanned to . . . the next day . . . then again . . . I dunno . . . [*Somewhat apologetically.*] That . . . waitress come to live with me . . . You know . . .

THE JANE: The redhead? One you went with before me?

THE GUY: Her!

THE JANE: She ain't much good!

THE GUY: Well, I hadda have somebody keep house . . . Bein' married sorta spoils you . . . It's hard, livin' alone.

THE JANE: She musta known how to cook good, though . . . workin' in a rest'rant . . . Better'n me . . .

THE GUY: Her cookin' was all right . . . But she didn't come near you in other ways . . .

THE JANE: [*She understands him. The trace of a smile is on her face.*] What ways?

THE GUY: Aw, other ways . . . She wasn't so extra! Then she beat it . . . I didn't care.

THE JANE: Now that you ain't got 'er, you come to get me back . . . ?

THE GUY: [*Looks at her stupidly.*] Huh? . . . Oh! . . . I just thought maybe . . .

THE JANE: Just for my cookin', eh?

THE GUY: No, not only for that . . . I usta like you . . . I never forgot them times, when we used to go steady . . . when you was real lovin' . . . [*Pause.*] An' o' course, cookin' counts, too!

THE JANE: Didn't you figure on the Bookkeeper?

THE GUY: I thought maybe you got tired of 'im by now. Stopped bein' wild . . . We could have things better now. I'm makin' a little money . . . sellin' booze . . . You could take it easier . . . The Bookkeeper ain't givin' you such a awful lot . . .

THE JANE: [*With a harsh laugh.*] The Bookkeeper? He don't gimme nothin' . . . I don't even want him to, no more! He don't count . . . Wisht 'e was dead . . . Because o' him I ran away. An' look what he done to me . . . This is what I got! He was a fake . . . ! He as good as killed me . . . I ain't worth a thing, no more.

THE GUY: [*Goes nearer.*] If that's the way you feel, what's to stop you from comin' home with me?

THE JANE: [*Does not move away. She is indifferent.*] Aw-w-w. . . .

THE GUY: [*Very close to her.*] I ain't sore no more . . . I'm willin' to forget . . . You still real pretty, too . . . So . . . don't be afraid, I'll be good to you. . . .

THE JANE: I guess I deserved it when you wasn't. . . .

[THE GUY *awkwardly tries to draw her to him.*]

THE JANE: [*Stands there, unmoved by his proximity. She does not draw away. But, suddenly:*]

The Bookkeeper wouldn't let me . . .

THE GUY: Don't worry 'bout him . . . He couldn't stop you. You two ain't married!

THE JANE: An' if he did? What would you do?
[*Looks at him fixedly.*]

THE GUY: [*Uncomfortably.*] Oh . . . I . . .
Well, he couldn't, that's all!

THE JANE: [*Excitedly takes hold of his hand. Intensely:*] If he did . . . would you fight? Would you—shoot 'im? Would you? [*She is fairly hypnotizing THE GUY with her eyes.*]

THE GUY: [*Shifting from foot to foot.*] Wouldn't have to shoot 'im . . . We could talk it out . . .

THE JANE: [*Not listening . . . In a frenzy.*] No, shoot 'im, I mean . . . Remember, he took me away from you . . . We coulda been happy. . . . It was him got wild idees in my head . . .

[*Rushes to dresser. Pulls out top drawer. Next, a revolver is in her hand.*] He got his gun here . . .

[THE GUY, with a low whistle of astonishment, stares at the weapon, but makes no attempt to take it from her.]

[THE JANE *sighs*. Lets the revolver drop into the drawer, which she shuts.

[THE BOOKKEEPER appears at the door. He is in his chauffeur's uniform. Remains on the threshold, looks at THE GUY in surprise.]

THE JANE: [Without moving from the dresser.]
The Bookkeeper . . . !

THE GUY: [Hesitates for a moment. At a loss. Then, slowly:] Please' to meet ya!

THE BOOKKEEPER: [Mumbles.] Please' to meet ya!

[They are awkwardly silent.]

THE GUY: I . . . She an' I . . . We usta . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: [Nods.] I know . . .

THE JANE: [Turns. In a chilled, hard voice to THE BOOKKEEPER] He come to take me home. . . .

[THE BOOKKEEPER acknowledges this with another nod; is silent.]

THE JANE: Well . . . what you got to say . . . ?

THE BOOKKEEPER: [With a puzzled look.]
Me . . . ? What you want me to say . . . ?

THE GUY: [*Timidly.*] I thought we could talk it over . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: [*After studying THE GUY for a while.*] Well, sit down!

THE GUY: [*Is apparently uncomfortable; but he sits down.*] Thanks!

[THE BOOKKEEPER also sits down, opposite THE GUY. They sit in silence.]

THE JANE: [*From her place at the dresser, looks at them for a long while. Then she sighs. Silence again. To THE GUY:*] Well . . . if you're stay-in' . . . want some coffee, maybe . . . ?

THE GUY: [*More and more uncomfortable.*] No . . . it's all right . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: [*With a grin which apparently affords him relief.*] That's the strongest we got . . . !

THE GUY: It's all right . . .

[*After apparent hesitation, during which he moves his hand to his hip pocket several times, pulls out bottle.*] I . . . I got some here . . . if . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: Well . . . !

[*Silence. Then to THE JANE:*] Get us some glasses . . . !

THE JANE: [*Slowly goes to the wardrobe. From the top shelf she takes down two tumblers and a cup. Puts them on the table.*] There's only two . . . an' a cup . . .

THE GUY: The cup'll be all right for me . . .
[*Takes it.*]

THE BOOKKEEPER: No . . . you take the glass . . . [*Exchanges the cup for a tumbler.*]

[THE JANE *seats herself on the edge of the bed. The table is within her reach. After a while:*]

THE GUY: Le's have some, eh? [*Without waiting for an answer, uncorks the bottle, pours out the whiskey. He is the first one to lift his glass.*] Well, here's how!

[THE BOOKKEEPER *also raises his glass; but says nothing. Drinks.*]

[THE JANE *drinks. Two more rounds, in silence.*]

THE BOOKKEEPER: [*Quite cordially now.*]
Well, what you doin' nowadays? Still workin' in the fact'ry?

THE GUY: No . . . ! This is my graft now!
[*Points to the whiskey bottle.*]

THE BOOKKEEPER: [*Respectfully.*] You don't say! Must be lots o' dough in it . . . !

THE GUY: Pretty fair! [*They drink again.*]

THE BOOKKEEPER: I was always aimin' to get into that game . . . I wouldn't mind cleanin' up . . .

THE GUY: Well, what's stoppin' you . . . ? It's easy enough to get in. [*They drink.* THE JANE also takes a drink.]

THE BOOKKEEPER: How . . . ?

THE JANE: [*Drinks by herself. Suddenly, slamming down her glass, to BOOKKEEPER:*] What about me? Don't I count? You gonna let 'im take me?

THE BOOKKEEPER: Shut up! [*To THE GUY.*] What you mean, easy . . . ? Could I get in . . . ?

THE JANE: [*Jumps up. She is staggering. To THE BOOKKEEPER.*] You ain't gonna fight for me?

[*THE BOOKKEEPER makes a threatening motion.*]

THE GUY: [*With a wave of his hand.*] Let 'er alone, she's drunk . . . How you can start? Oh, I guess I could show you the way . . .

THE JANE: [*Reaches for the bottle, pours her-*

self some whiskey. Drinks. Staggers to THE GUY, embraces him. To THE BOOKKEEPER:] Look, here I am with 'im . . . Don't you care? Ain't you gonna take me away? . . . Look . . . I'm kissin' 'im . . . [*Attempts to kiss THE GUY.*]

THE GUY: [*Paying no attention to her.*] I always need some live-wire to sell for me . . . Chauffeurs, 'specially!

THE BOOKKEEPER: What's in it for me?

[*They drink. Their tripping tongues and heavily moving heads indicate that they, too, are getting intoxicated.*]

THE JANE: [*In a drunken whisper, to THE GUY.*] He took me . . . Even 'fore we got married . . . We was lovers . . . That's why I kidded you 'bout the baby . . . It was him . . .

THE GUY: [*Suddenly bends across table. To BOOKKEEPER.*] That true what she's sayin' . . . ?

THE JANE: [*Diabolically.*] True . . . true . . . He had me . . . I didn't wanna marry you . . . Kill 'im!

THE BOOKKEEPER: [*Squirming under THE GUY's glance.*] That was a long time ago . . .

THE GUY: [*Lifts his fist; lets it drop again.*]

Reaches for glass.] Yeah . . . a long time ago . . .

THE JANE: Kill 'im, sweetie . . . We coulda been happy . . . He's a fake . . . He took me 'way from you . . . Kill 'im . . . ! I'll get the gun . . . !

[Rushes to drawer, snatches out the gun. Vainly tries to thrust it into THE GUY'S hand. He shoos her off.]

THE BOOKKEEPER: We'd go fifty-fifty on what I sell, eh?

THE GUY: The hell we would . . . Nobody splits that way . . . You'd get a quarter . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: *[Drinks.]* You go to hell with that . . .

THE GUY: What you want me to do,—give you all of it?

THE JANE: *[Still with the gun.]* Here, sweetie . . . Go on! Get even . . . He made me leave you . . . Go on!

THE GUY: *[Shoving her away.]* You beat it!

THE BOOKKEEPER: *[Drinks. He is definitely drunk now.]* You damn piker . . . That's all you are . . . a goddamn piker . . .

THE GUY: [*Jumps up. Staggers over to THE BOOKKEEPER.*] Who . . . who you callin' a piker? Say that 'gain . . .

THE BOOKKEEPER: A dirty . . . louse of a . . . piker . . .

[*THE GUY takes a swing at him. THE BOOKKEEPER is knocked from the chair. THE GUY stands over him; the other tries to rise, he knocks him down again. BOOKKEEPER clutches at THE GUY's legs . . .*]

[*They are rolling on the floor. The table is overturned, the chairs fall. THE JANE jumps up on the bed, from where she gives shrill cries of glee.*]

THE JANE: Go on! Hit 'im . . . He's a fake . . . He ain't the Bookkeeper . . . !

[*Just now THE GUY is on top. THE BOOKKEEPER reaches out for the bottle, which has fallen to the floor,—next he is brandishing it. THE GUY rises, backs against the bed. THE BOOKKEEPER is after him.*]

THE JANE: Kill 'im . . . ! [*THE GUY swings around, to take the gun from her.*]

[*THE JANE has almost given it to him, when she snatches back the revolver. Cries out shrilly.*] No . . . ! I'm gonna . . . !

[*Fires at THE BOOKKEEPER, who falls back.*
THE JANE drops the revolver.]

THE GUY: [*Sobering, pulls away from her in horror. Then, almost joyfully:*] You killed 'im . . . ! It was you!

THE JANE: [*Sits down on the edge of the bed. Silent for a long time; keeps on staring at THE BOOKKEEPER.*] Yeah, me . . . But was it him I wanted killed? . . .

CURTAIN

PART IV

Three

[*Night in Bronx Park. THE JANE is sitting on a bench, alone. She is wearing a very quiet, very respectable, dress, an equally decent hat. A suitcase is next to her, on the ground. In the uncertain light her face is only dimly seen.*

[*At some distance from the bench, on what appear to be sheets of newspaper spread on the grass, is the indistinct form of a man, curled up, asleep.*

[*At the rise of the curtain THE JANE is mumbling to herself. For quite a while the words can not be distinguished. After some time she reaches for her pocketbook, fishes out a few newspaper clippings.*]

THE JANE: [*Looking at them.*] No . . . this ain't good . . . This neither . . . Gosh . . . I remember this here one . . . Fulla lies . . . I never sang in no choir . . . [*Impatiently drops clippings.*] Didn't even get my pitcher right . . . An' I smiled, too . . . [*Picks up one of the sheets.*] I don't look that old . . . I'm only nineteen . . . That's all . . . nineteen . . . [*Shrugs.*]

Well, anyway, I got in the papers . . . That's more than lotsa girls can say . . .

[*Silence. She is putting away the clippings.*]

What'd I shoot 'im for . . . ? Christ, the way they kept on askin' . . . That's what I wanned to know, too . . . There was the gun, yeah . . . it was real handy . . . It got me 'xcited, lookin' at it for weeks . . . But why didn't I shoot my husban', 'stead? [*Titters.*] A hot one, that was:—Self-defense. . . ! I coulda laughed when the lawyer sprung that . . . The Bookkeeper didn't have the guts to try nothin' . . . Self-defense! Ha! Sure I said yes . . . Sure, the Bookkeeper was drunk an' tried to shoot me when my husban' come for me . . . It was *his* gun . . . They give my husban' a coupla months . . . Shoulda gave 'im life . . . Shoulda hung 'im . . . He must be out by now . . . To hell with 'im . . . !

[*Silence.*]

How'd I come to marry 'im . . . I never got that clear . . . The neighbors an' Ma . . . my frien's . . . Never lettin' me alone . . . pushin' 'way at me . . . I hadda! Well, I tried hard,—nobody can say I didn't . . . The Bookkeeper, though . . . Him on Broadway an' me tied to the flat . . . Couldn't let that go!

[*Silence.*]

Married to one man all the time . . . Not so good! . . . Still, that first night we danced at Coney . . . that was nice, anyway . . . thrillin' . . . I could think I was in love. . . . Maybe I was, too . . . Nope, I was in love just once,—with the Bookkeeper . . . Or not with 'im, neither? Who then? Musta been in love with somebody . . . or what'd I give in for . . . ?

[*Silence.*]

I was a ruined girl, yeah . . . but it was fun, goin' steady . . . doin' things on the q-t . . . Tremblin' for fear they'd find me out . . . that was excitin', all right . . . But everybody was pushin' me . . . pushin' me . . .

[*Silence.*]

That first time I seen the Bookkeeper . . . I couldn't hardly control myself . . . I walked real close to 'im . . . I had that new dress on . . . I showed off, movin' close . . . The way he got hot under the collar . . . I knew he'd come up to the stock-room . . . It was dark! Ummm . . . ! The way he looked them days . . . I could see it in the dark, plain like anythin' . . . Promisin' wonderful things . . . makin' love . . . Just a fake! Now I know . . . Makin' out

he was all the fellers in the world . . . He *was*, too! Aw, a fake . . . But maybe I didn't wanna shoot 'im . . . Well, he's dead!

[*Silence.*]

Would I go home to Ma, I wonder . . . ? She'd kick me out . . . Anyway, what if I did? Work at a typewriter 'gain? Ugh! Why did I go an' shoot the Bookkeeper, like a sap . . . ? Everybody knows it, on Broadway, too . . . It's been in the papers . . . Well, at least I'm famous now, too . . . like the rest of 'em . . . Sure, Ma would kick me out. . . . Oh, well, I can sit here a li'l. . . . Lotsa things can happen in the mornin' . . . Some feller could come along an' pick me up . . . Aw, what would I be doin' with another? Still, what else is there to do? Where else can I go . . . ?

[*Sits with head hanging. Begins to weep slowly.*]

There ain't even the Bookkeeper to think 'bout no more . . . I usta think of 'im when I was blue . . . It was good . . .

[*Weeps. Shudders.*]

It's cold here, too. . . .

[*She is sobbing aloud, now.*]

[*The form on the newspaper begins to stir. The man sits up. Rubs his eyes. Yawns.*]

THE GUY: Hey . . . What you makin' so much noise for . . . ?

[*Evidently he can't see her face from his bed on the grass. She does not answer. He groans, falls back on the papers.*]

THE JANE: [*After a long silence; in an even tone.*] That you, ain't it . . . ? Outa jail . . .

THE GUY: [*From his bed.*] After me 'gain? . . . Ain't I had 'nough troubles . . . ? What you want o' me now? I wanna have peace . . .

THE JANE: [*Contemptuously.*] Well, you ain't gonna be fightin' 'bout booze in a hurry 'gain . . . Nor sellin' it . . . My husban', ha! *Me* you didn't wanna fight for. . . . You shoulda been the one shot. . . .

[*Silence. She shudders again, sinks into herself. Then she gets up; slowly goes over to him. Stands looking down on THE GUY.*]

Well . . . I . . . Move on over . . . ! I wanna lie down, too. . . . It's cold . . . alone. . . .

CURTAIN

PART IV

Four

[Morning. Or, rather, the lull between dawn and day. An indefinite, unreal pinkness, and shadows that can be sensed more than seen.]

[This is still the park, but now the spot of green occupies only the center of the stage. It is on a slight elevation. On the two sides, nothing as yet, only the pink glow.]

[On the mound, THE JANE and THE GUY are lying on their newspaper-bed, close to each other, arms entwined. For a while they are motionless.]

THE JANE: *[Sits up after a while. Rubs her eyes. She is still not quite conscious of her surroundings. Now she stiffens with a jerk and a shudder passes through her body as she sees THE GUY next to her. Puts out her hand, as though to touch him. There is no tenderness in the gesture, only some curiosity,—but she violently snatches the hand away when he finally stirs. Impassively, though in a semi-loud voice:]* Well, it's mornin' . . .

[THE GUY does not reply, but he shifts his body.]

[THE JANE looks at him. Shrugs. Continues to sit there with a blank, emotionless face.]

THE GUY: [Stirring, his body comes in contact with THE JANE'S. Slowly, as though the movements pained him, he sits up. From between his teeth, without looking at her:] You still here. . . . [It is half question, half complaint.]

THE JANE: [Over her shoulder.] What's the diff'rence?

THE GUY: Christ!

[He throws himself on the grass again. Crosses his arms under his head.] Well, what's next?

THE JANE: Howda I know? You're the one to know. . . .

THE GUY: An' I don't know! See? I'm just layin' here an' I don't give a hang what happens. See? That's me. An' you can go to hell if you feel like it . . . Get me?

[As THE JANE does not answer, he raises himself on his elbow. There is a broad, malicious grin on his face.] I s'pose you have it all figgered out . . . I'm gonna go to work . . . get a job an' . . . Well, that's all cockeyed! I'm just layin' here . . . That's all!

[TWO WORKMEN cross the park together. They

are carrying dinner-pails. Another man follows at a distance.] Look at 'em saps . . . beatin' it to work . . .

THE JANE: Well,—if they got jobs . . .

THE GUY: Lettem have all the jobs they want. . . . I ain't got none,—an' I'm proud of it. To hell with work! Makin' things for others to buy,—buildin' houses for others to live in . . . I ain't crazy!

[Now A GIRL crosses the stage. A jazz-baby, a stenog, hurrying to work on her high-heeled shoes. He points to her.] Breakin' her neck to get there on time . . . What she get out of it? All I got was jail, kicks . . . Work be damned!

[The pink glow has gradually given way to a clear serene light, about which there is a touch of electric energy, a suggestion of artificial intensity.]

[House-shapes have risen and iron forms against the sky. A weak city-sun is reflected by the glass of many windows.]

THE JANE: So what's gonna happen . . . ?

THE GUY: Whatta I care? I'm satisfied right here in the grass. It's swell. Soft, too. I had no idee grass smells so good.

THE JANE: *[Her face softens.]* Sure. It's like

. . . like country . . . [*After some silence:*] My cousin got a farm . . . My cousin in Connecticut . . . This is what that must be like . . . He wrote me, too . . . long ago . . . Told me I could come any time I felt like . . . Maybe . . . I wouldn't mind livin' on a farm. . . . [*Silence.*] There'd be room for both of us, I guess . . .

THE GUY: [*Measuring her. Disparagingly:*] Aw . . . !

THE JANE: I'd like it, all right . . . Lotsa fresh air . . . an' cows . . . trees . . . eggs . . . chickens . . . an' . . . well, chickens . . .

THE GUY: [*Nods.*] Sure, there's lots of 'em. . . . It's easy livin', all right . . .

THE JANE: Better than in the city. . . .

THE GUY: No rent . . . Butter 'n eggs free . . . Lots better!

THE JANE: Maybe I could write to my cousin . . .

[*But now the city breaks in. The whistles sound, bells, the thunder of wheels. Hammer blows come, the singing rhythm of labor, even vague strains of music, indefinite but pulsating, moving, gay. The shrill, drumlike tattoo of an electric drill. A humming sound rises, almost a song.*]

[THE JANE and THE GUY instinctively turn that way, looking down upon the city from the height.]

THE GUY: Gettin' pretty lively . . .

THE JANE: Yeah . . . Them lights, like it was evenin'. . . .

THE GUY: Music, too. . . .

THE JANE: Fulla life . . . Everythin'. . . .
[Turns away for an instant. Wistfully:] I oughta write my cousin, I guess!

THE GUY: [Listlessly.] Uhuh! [After a while.]
The farm, eh? Not much doin' on a farm. . . .

THE JANE: No . . . ! Sorta slow . . . quiet-like . . .

THE GUY: No people, nothin' . . . Just cows an' trees . . .

THE JANE: Umm! Here there's always somethin' doin' . . . Lotsa things goin' on . . .

[THE GUY tears himself away from the sight before him; sits down on the bench, meditating. Idly picks up the sheets of newspaper on which they had been sleeping. Slowly turns the pages, scanning the columns.]

THE JANE: [Who is still standing.] Lookin' at

the ads? [*And, as he does not answer.*] That's yest'day's. . . .

THE GUY: [*Lets the paper drop. Slowly.*] I'll buy another paper . . . later . . . There oughta be lotsa jobs to-morrow. . . .

THE JANE: Yeah,—to-morrow. . . .

[*Quietly joins him on the bench. They sit there, not very close to each other, yet the space indicates no hostility. Their faces are toward the city.*]

CURTAIN

THE
JOHN DAY



COMPANY
INC.

